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PICTORIAL
HISTORY OF MEXICO
AND THE
MEXICAN WAR;

COMPRISING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

ANCIENT AZTEC EMPIRE, THE CONQUEST BY CORTES, MEXICO
UNDER THE SPANIARDS, THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION, THE
REPUBLIC, THE TEXAN WAR, AND THE RECENT
WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES.

BY JOHN FROST, LL. D.

AUTHOR OF PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE WORLD, PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE
UNITED STATES, BOOK OF THE ARMY, BOOK OF THE NAVY, &c. &c.

EMBELLISHED WITH FIVE HUNDRED ENGRAVINGS, FROM DESIGNS OF W. CROOME AND OTHER
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PREFACE.

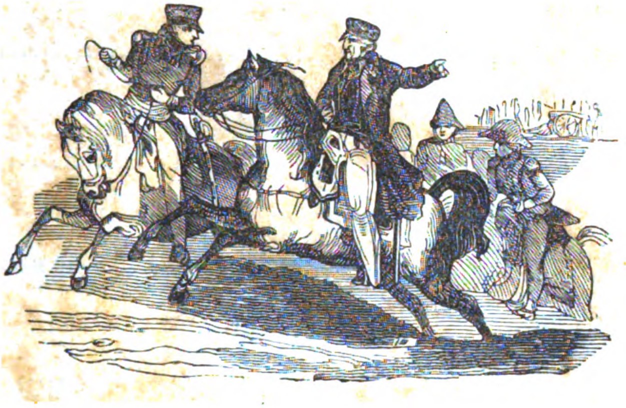
The recent war between the United States and Mexico has awakened in the people of the former country a degree of interest in the history and condition of the latter, which it never possessed before. The reading public are not satisfied with the accounts of the war which have been published, but evince an anxiety to learn something of the whole antecedent history of the sister republic. To satisfy this inquiry the following work has been written.

The account of Ancient Mexico, and of the Conquest, is founded on the histories of Bernal Diaz, Solis, and other Spanish writers, and the learned and eloquent History of the Conquest, by our accomplished countryman, Mr. Prescott. From equally authentic and reliable authorities are drawn the facts comprised in the history, of the Revolution, Mexico under the Spaniards, the Republic under its successive presidents, and the Texan war.

In composing the narrative of the recent war between Mexico and the United States, which forms the largest and most important part of the work, recourse has been had to official authorities chiefly; the despatches of the general officers, and the reports of their subordinates being considered the most reliable sources of information; although the author has had opportunity of considerable personal intercourse with officers of rank who have taken an active and conspicuous part in the contest.

In embellishing the work, the author has had the advantage of Mr. Croome's invaluable services; and he is indebted to Messrs. Root, Simons, Collins, Butler, Gunn & England, and Van Loan, for daguerreotype portraits of officers; by which means a degree of authenticity in this department has been attained, which was out of the question before the invention of this important art.

It is certainly a gratifying task to any patriotic American writer to record the events of the recent war with the Mexican Republic. Such a glorious career of successful valour seldom presents itself to the notice of the historian. In many respects this contest is unparalleled in the annals of the world's affairs; and it will for ever hold a conspicuous place on that pillar of glory where the deeds of American freemen are emblazoned for the admiration of mankind.



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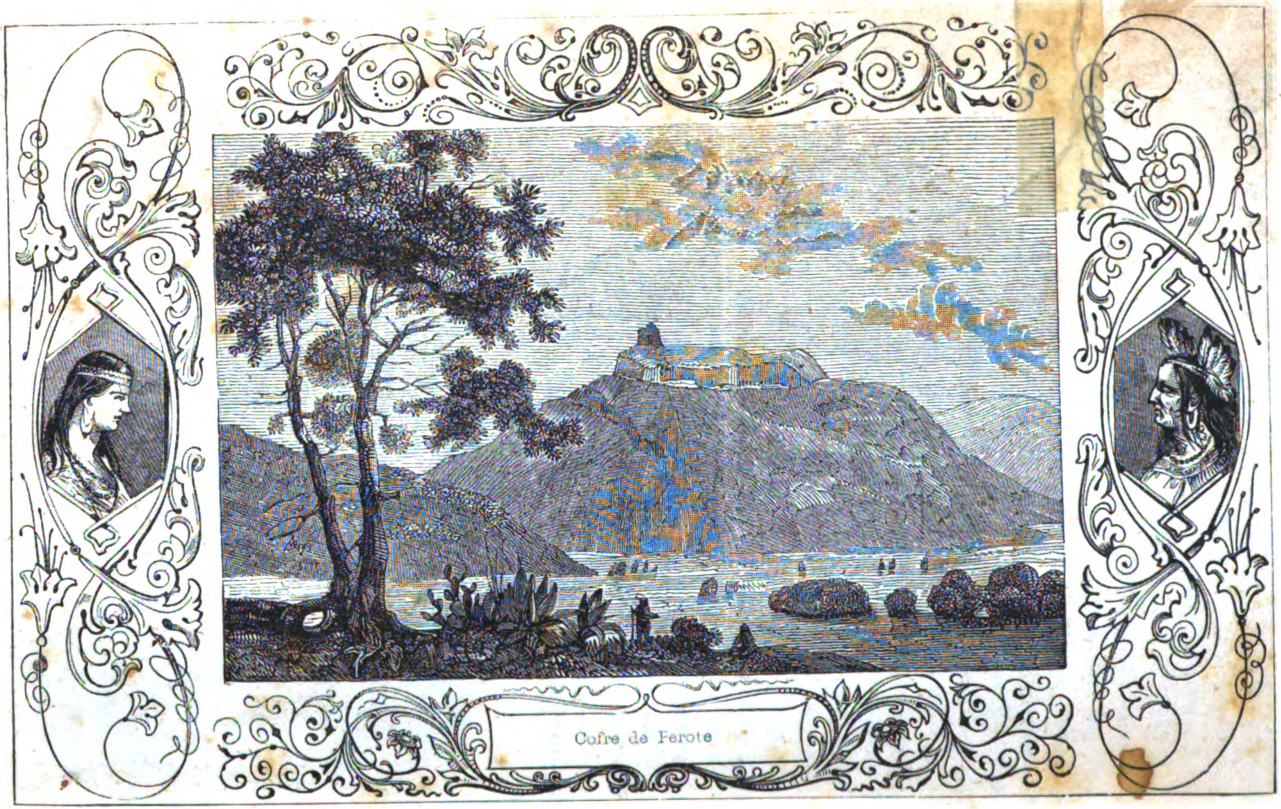
MEXICO
AND THE
MEXICAN
WAR.

CHAPTER I.

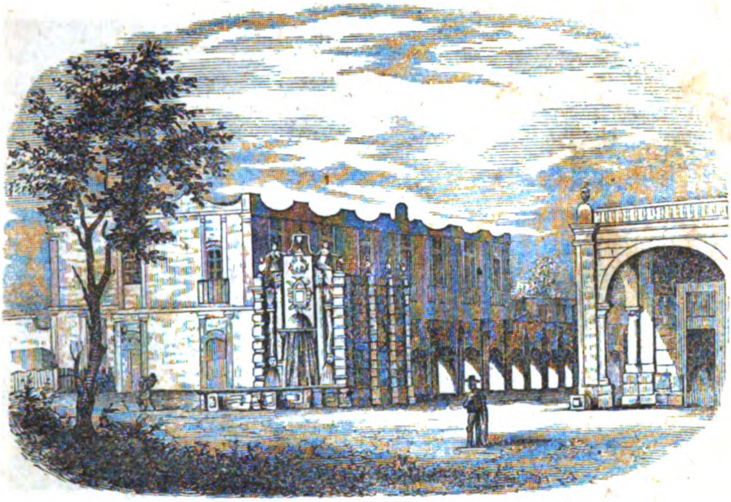
GEOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF MEXICO.

THE line of separation between Mexico and Guatimala is extremely irregular, commencing on the east side with the river Sarstoon, which it follows to its source, whence it runs north to north latitude 17° 30′ and then takes a course west and south-west until it reaches latitude 15° 45′, when it changes its direction to north-east. On the west and south-west the Pacific washes its shores, while its boundaries on the north and west are the United States and the Gulf of Mexico.

The disorders of the government, and the lawless state of the population, have hitherto prevented our acquiring any thing like an accurate account of the country or its population; and, until very recently, the accounts of Baron Humboldt were the only reliable sources of information respecting it. The portion lying south of the Tropic of Cancer, is by far the most rich and populous, but the numbers of the population decrease as we go northward, some of the so called states of the republic being occupied almost wholly by unsubdued savages. Mexico differs from almost all other countries in the great variety of its climate, a feature arising not so much from its extent in latitude as from the diversity of its surface. The northern extension of the Andes, if the Cordilleras may so be called, enters the country on the south, and diverges, following the line of the coasts on each side of the country. The eastern arm finally subsides into the great plains of Texas, but the other preserves its character until it joins with the Rocky Mountains in the United States. Between these two arms of the Cordilleras is comprised an immense central table-land, nearly three-fifths of the whole surface of the republic, known as the Plateau of Anahuac. The elevation of this plateau, varying from six thousand to eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, causes it to have a temperate climate, notwithstanding that a considerable portion of it is within the tropics. The surface of this table-land is diversified by some very high mountains, and a few well-defined ridges subdivide it into smaller plateaus, to which various names have been given. It is not traversed by many valleys, however, and a road, fourteen hundred miles in length, connects the capital with the city of Santa Fe, with little deviation from a level. The most remarkable tract in the Plateau of Anahuac, is the plain in which the capital is situated, known as the Plain of Tenochtitlan. This plain is fifty-five miles long and thirty-five broad, containing an area of seventeen hundred square miles, surrounded with porphyritic and basaltic rocks. One hundred and sixty square miles of it are covered with water, which is deposited in five principal lakes, situated on different levels. Southeastwardly from the city is the Lake of Chalco; north-westwardly, that of Tezcuco, and north of that, those of San Christoval and Zumpango. The largest of these lakes is that of Tezcuco, which covers an area of seventy square miles, and has an elevation but three feet lower than the great Square of Mexico. The lakes San Christoval, Chalco, and Tonanitla, are five feet higher than Tezcuco, while Zumpango, the smallest of all, has a level thirty feet higher than that of Tezcuco. The head of water which could be poured over the city by these lakes may be readily perceived. In 1629, the city of Mexico was almost wholly inundated, and preparations were being made for the foundation of a new capital, when an earthquake fortunately drew off the excess of water. An immense artificial canal, the Desague of Huchuetoga, was then commenced, for the purpose of draining these lakes, but it was not finished until the year 1789. The length of the cut is about twelve miles, it is one hundred and fifty feet deep,

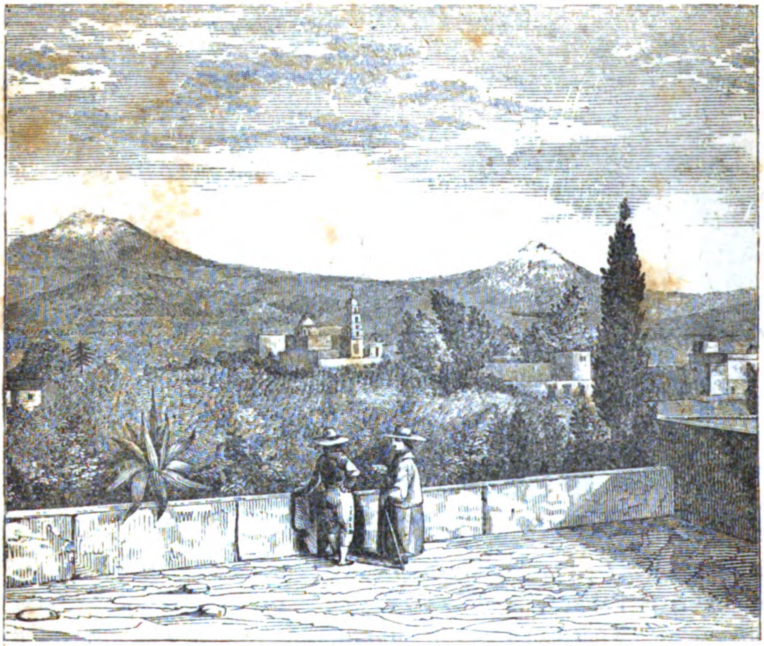


Cofre de Perote



Termination of the Aqueduct in the City of Mexico.

and three hundred wide, and it discharges the waters of the valley into the river Panuco, three hundred feet below the level of the Lake Zumpango. This canal and the beautiful aqueducts with which the city of Mexico is supplied with water, the people owe to the energy of the Spanish government, and they are almost the only works of this kind in the country. Earthquakes are frequent in Mexico, but they seldom do any mischief, a remark which will also apply to the many volcanoes in the country. On the south-east side of the plain of Tenochtitlan, those of Popocatepetl, seventeen thousand seven hundred and sixteen feet, Iztaccihuatl fifteen thousand seven hundred feet, Orizaba seventeen thousand three hundred and eighty feet, and the Cofre de Perote thirteen thousand four hundred and sixteen feet above the level of the sea, meet the eye, while other mountains and volcanoes, whose smoking craters might be a cause of continual apprehension, bound the horizon on other sides. The purity of the atmosphere has an astonishing tendency to diminish apparent distances, and nowhere does this produce a more remarkable effect than in the city of Mexico. Most of the mountains surrounding the valley are at least fifteen miles distant; yet on looking down any of the streets of the city, it appears to be terminated by a mass of rocks, which are seen so distinctly, that on a clear day, all the undulations of the surface may be traced, and the trees and patches of different vegetation readily distinguished. To the south-east the view is bounded by the lofty Popocatepetl, higher than any mountain in North America except Mount St. Elias; Iztaccihuatl, which is much



Volcanoes, as seen from Tacubaya.

nearer, is two thousand feet lower, but the two stand forth proudly pre-eminent from any view in the valley, and strangers delighted to record the pleasure with which they watch the effect of the last rays of light playing upon the summits in the evening when all around is sinking into obscurity.

The want of water occasions serious disadvantages to Mexico, the rivers, compared with the extent of country, being few and unimportant. The lakes, however, are extensive, and the Spaniards, finding that the only manure which the land required was water, raised many hydraulic constructions, at great cost, for purposes of irrigation, which the Mexicans have suffered to fall into ruin, and which will probably be allowed to remain so. The country produces every thing that will flourish in the torrid and temperate zones of good quality, yet so indolent are the natives, and so regardless of all attempts at systematic agriculture, that a single season of drought produces a famine. The rural population then go into the deserts in search of wild plants, and generally with success. The great variety of the productions is occasioned by the extent of the country through twenty-one degrees of latitude and the rapidity of the slope on either side. On the east side especially the climates are distinctly marked by the vegetation. "On the ascent from Vera Cruz," says Humboldt, "climates succeed each other in layers, and the traveller passes in review in the course of two days, the whole scale of vegetation from the parisitic plants of the tropics to the pines of the arctic regions."

AS respects climate, Mexico is divided into the *tierras calientes*, or hot regions, the *tierras templadas* or temperate regions and the *tierras frias* or cold regions. The first include the low grounds on the east and west coast, comprising on the eastern slope the greater part of the states of Tamaulipas, Vera Cruz, Tabasco, and the peninsula of Yucatan. These tierras on the west are less extensive. The mean temperature is about 77° of Fahrenheit, and the growth of the soil consists principally of sugar, cotton, indigo, and bananas. The winter on the east coast lasts from October to April, during which time north or north-west winds blow with great violence for several days together. The shores at this time are free from pestilence, but with the summer the unhealthy season begins, and foreigners landing on the coast have little hope of escaping the yellow fever. At the height of two thousand five hundred feet above the sea, however, this scourge is almost wholly unknown.

The *tierras templadas* extend from two thousand five hundred to five thousand feet of elevation, and furnish us with the Mexican oak, and most of the fruits and grains of Europe. The cities situated in these regions, of which Jalapa is one, are famous for their salubrity and the inexhaustible supply of fruits. Great beauty and strength of vegetation result from the frequent fogs and humidity of the atmosphere, which, however, are objectionable in other points of view.

The *tierras frias* include all the vast plains elevated five thousand feet or more above the level of the sea. Here the mean temperature is about 64° Fahrenheit, but when the height of more than eight thousand feet is attained the climate is exceedingly disagreeable. Near Mexico, the limit of perpetual snow is twelve thousand to fifteen thousand feet high. In the *tierras frias*, the vegetation is not so vigorous as in the lower countries, but the climate is on the whole more favourable to human life. But the indolence of the natives prevents all exertions to raise more food than is necessary for the wants of a single season, and no one thinks, in times of plenty, of laying by a store for future contingencies, and hence when droughts or severe frosts occur, famine and its concomitant privations prove quite as destructive to life as the enemies of the coast.

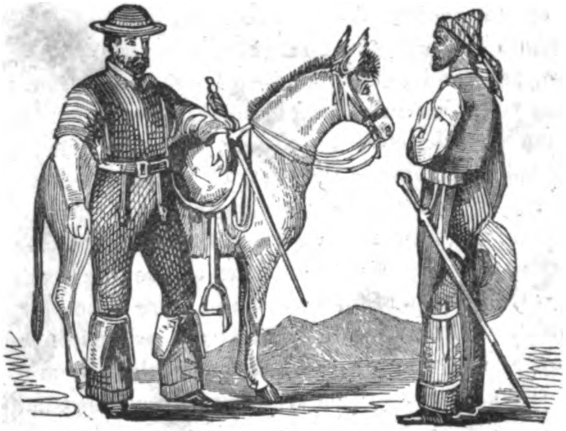
The geological features displayed by the Cordilleras are mostly remarkable for the non-appearance of granite, which is covered by porphyry, greenstone, amygdaloid, basalt, obsidian, and other rocks of igneous origin. Granite appears, however, in the chain bordering on the Pacific, and the port of Acapulco is said to be a natural excavation in that species of rock. The great central Plateau of Anahuac is a mass of porphyry characterized by the constant appearance of hornblende, and the entire absence of quartz, and it contains large and valuable deposits of gold and silver. These metals, however, occur in various rocks. Thus silver is found in syenite, in the mines of Comanja, in those of Guanaxuato the richest in Mexico, it is found in a primitive clay state, passing into talc-slate, while those of Real del Cardonal, Xalaca, and Lomo del Toro are situated in a bed of transition limestone. Humboldt says that there were in his time three thousand mines of silver and gold in the country, and before the war of independence, they produced about twenty-one millions of dollars in silver, and two millions in gold. Toward the close of the revolution, many of them were deserted; and they do not yield more than half of the sums named. Mining companies were formed in England for the purpose of working these natural sources of wealth properly; but the difficulties to be encountered were underrated, and the weakness of the government, the insecurity of property, bad roads, and imperfect mining processes have prevented their receiving any thing like a fair return for their enormous outlays. The Mexicans themselves understand scarcely any thing of the theory of mining, and their ignorance is only equalled by their obstinacy in adhering to inefficient and long exploded practices. The quantity of silver annually obtained from the mines exceeds that furnished by all the mines of Europe; but the gold is only in proportion to the silver as one to twenty-six. A table from 1834 to 1839 exhibits the coinage at the mints of Mexico as ranging from twelve to eleven millions of dollars, but it can hardly be depended upon. The distinguished traveller, M. Chevalier, presents a fair picture of the state of mining in the following extract, penned in 1835. "How can the mines be worked with any feeling of security when it requires a little army to escort the smallest portion of the precious metals to its place of destination. Between the mine of Real del Monte and the village of Tezcuco is a mountain pass, where a grand battle was fought between the miners and the banditti of the country. The former were defeated, overpowered by numbers; but not without having sold their lives as dearly as possible. The mine is now guarded by artillery and grape-shot, and the Englishmen employed there are regularly drilled in the use of the musket."

The principal mines are in the States of Guanaxuato, Zacatecas, **San Luis** Potosi, Chihuahua, Durango, Guadalaxara, and Mexico.

The ores appear to increase in richness on proceeding north; those in the confines of Durango and Sonora are peculiarly rich, lie near the surface, and hold out a promise of wealth superior to any that Mexico has yet produced. Iron is found in great abundance in some districts, but is little worked; copper, tin, lead, zinc, quicksilver, and other valuable mineral productions have been found, but with the exception of copper, little attention is paid to them.

The manufactures are in a miserable state, owing to the total want of industry and enterprise on the part of the Mexicans and their jealousy of the success of foreigners, and there is no prospect of any improvement, so long as the factories are prisons, in which those only are operatives who are compelled to work in them as a punishment for crime and insolvency. This lamentable state of things results from the selfish policy of the Spaniards, who prohibited manufactures in order to preserve for themselves a market. The Spaniards are bad mechanicians, and no efforts of foreigners have been able to prevail on the Mexicans to deviate from the routine of their forefathers. In all Mexico, within a few years, there was but one manufacturer of watches and optical instruments; the use of cast iron and tin for culinary utensils is never attempted; and some merchants, who imported a few wheelbarrows for moving the bales of goods at the custom-house in Vera Cruz, could not induce the workmen to avail themselves of such an innovation.

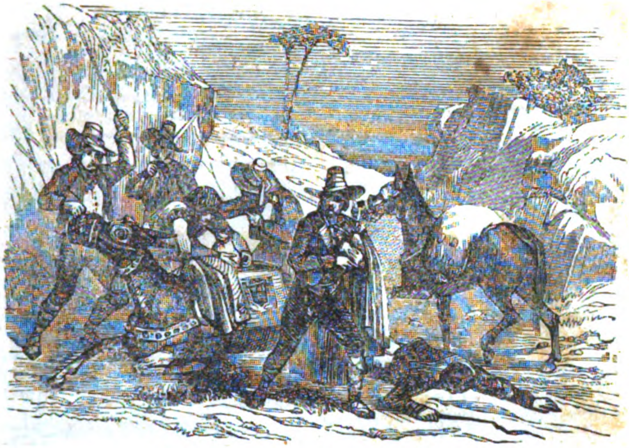
THE commerce of Mexico labours under serious disadvantages, which would hardly appear from her position on the map. Though both the east and west coasts are washed by the oceans, they are inaccessible during several months of the year; and when this is not the case, they are extremely unhealthy. Up to the beginning of the present century there was no commercial communication between Mexico and any other country except Spain, and that was almost wholly confined to the products of the mines. The ports were opened on the breaking out of the civil war, and the Spanish capitalists retiring to Cuba and Spain, gave place to Americans and British, who have continued to prosecute their enterprises with varied success, according as the rancorous hatred entertained by the natives against all who are more prosperous than themselves permitted or prohibited their speculations. The policy of the government has been constantly to fetter the commerce of the country, fixing the tariff on imports at an exorbitant rate, and instead of improving or keeping in repair any of the roads, they are suffering them to fall



Mexican Muleteers.

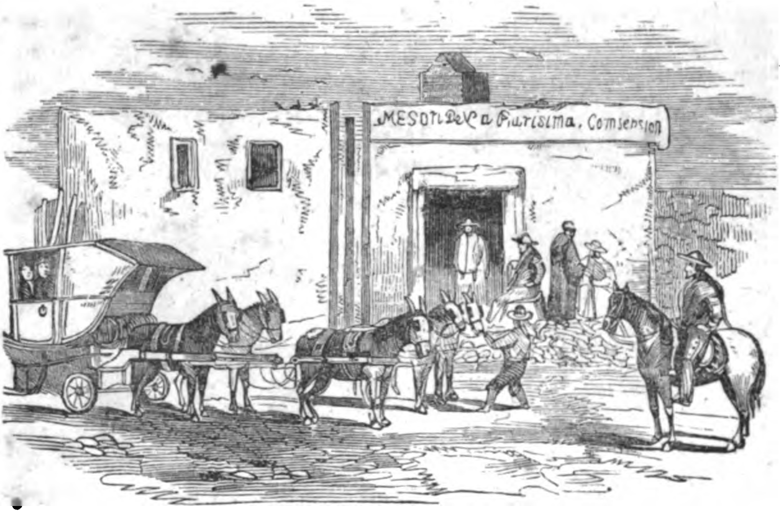
into a state of total decay. This is especially the case with the national road, constructed at an enormous expense, by the merchants of Vera Cruz, under the Spaniards, across deserts and precipices to the summit of the upper country. During the war of independence, it was cut up at various points, and the Mexicans have never replaced a stone, filled up a trench, or cut down any of the trees which have been allowed to spring up and grow to a magnificent height in the very middle of the road. The invading army of Americans, in whose nature it is not found to suffer such a state of things as this, did more for this great road in their march over it to the capital, than the government has done since the revolution. "In the upper country," says M. Chevalier, "nothing would be more easy than to open noble means of communication. The soil is naturally level; and basaltic rocks, particularly adapted for the construction of roads, are found in great abundance. But even where there are roads the Mexicans make little use of them. They carry to a yet more extravagant length the inconceivable predilection of the Spanish race in favour of transporting their goods on the backs of animals. You expect to meet with carts and wagons: no such thing; every thing is conveyed on the backs of mules or Indians. Troops of little consumptive donkeys bring into the city in parcels, not much bigger than a man's two fists, the charcoal required for the culinary operations of the inhabitants. The price of every bulky article is thus increased to an enormous degree. The interior districts are as inaccessible as if they were cut off by an enemy's army, and famine frequently ensues."

The laws of the country are said to be mild and just; but if they were the contrary, it would make little difference, as nothing can be



Robbers plundering.

more appalling to citizens of well ordered states than the anarchy which has hitherto universally prevailed. The frequent changes in the government have prevented any measures for the restoration of law and order, and the whole country teems with robbers. Seldom did a diligence pass between Vera Cruz and Mexico without being stopped and robbed, and sometimes black-mail was levied more than once. The environs of the large cities are all infested with malefactors, who are at all times ready to perform a deed of violence. An English charge d'affaires was lassoed at midday on the Alameda or public walk of Mexico, and ministers have been several times robbed of their private despatches by desperadoes in the service of the government itself. Insurrections have become so common that we are almost able to give regulations for conducting them. "The first act is called a *pronunciamiento*. An officer of any rank, from a general down to a lieutenant, *pronounces* himself against the established order, or against an institution which displeases him, or against any thing else. He gets together a detachment, a company, or a regiment, as the case may be, and these generally, without more ado, place themselves at his disposal. The second act is called the *grito*, or outcry, when two or three articles are drawn up to state the motives or objects of the insurrection. If the matter is of some importance the outcry is called a *plan*. At the third act the insurgents and the partisans of government are opposed to one another, and mutually examine each other's forces. At the fourth act they come to blows; but, according to the improved system lately introduced, the fighting is carried on in a very distant, moderate, and respectful manner. However, one party is declared victor, and the beaten party *dispro-*


MESON De La Purisima. Comsension

Mexican Inn, between Jalapa and Puebla.

nounces. The conquerors march to Mexico, and their triumphal entry into the capital constitutes the fifth act of the play; the vanquished, meanwhile, embark at Vera Cruz or Tampico with all the honours of war."*

In a country like Mexico, the military is a favourite service from the high pay and privileges of the soldier, and the fact that the army is the only school of promotion to civic rank. The troops and their officers generally have no ideas whatever of honour, and are as faithless and treacherous as they are revengeful.

The Roman Catholic is the established religion, but its influence over the white people is far less than has been represented, while the Indians, never thoroughly converted, are relapsing into idolatry. This may be in part owing to the expulsion of the Spanish priests and monks during the revolution, and the substitution in their stead of an order of creoles, of no particular morals. They are required to teach all the people to read and write, but the work is not performed, and the higher branches of learning can hardly be acquired in the country.

The number of the population has been variously estimated, the most correct being probably about seven millions. The inhabitants are remarkable for the distinctions which characterize them into classes. Four grades may be enumerated, all of which are more or less rivals of each other. First, there are the pure Spaniards, who once numbered eighty thousand, but do not now exceed twenty-five thousand, and as far as politics are concerned, are a degraded class. The second class is the wealthiest and most powerful part of the population, estimated by Chevalier to number one million three hundred thousand, known as creoles, or native whites of European descent. Then come the native Mexicans, or Indians, numbering about three millions eight hundred thousand, and constituting the great body of rural labourers; and lastly, we have the mixed castes, mestizoes, mulattoes, zamboes, quadroons, and quinteroons, exceeding in number one million nine hundred thousand. All distinctions of colour have been done away with, politically, by the revolution. Formerly it was one of the royal prerogatives to admit one of any shade to the exclusive privileges of a white, by decreeing "that he be deemed white." The mulattoes and zamboes reside principally in the low countries, the whites on the table-land. The Indians are divided into many tribes, speaking about twenty different languages. They are still characterized as they were at the time of the conquest, by indolence, gross superstition, and blind submission to their superiors. Their religion appears to be changed more in form than in any thing else, as they seem to look on the processions and ceremonies of the Catholic church with the same unthinking, childish delight that their ancestors viewed the mummeries of their idolatry. They are scattered over the country as labourers, artisans, workmen, or beggars; the latter occupation or profession, as it might be called in Mexico, being as numerously patronized as either of the others. They would seem to be incapable of any high degree of civilization, but are susceptible of great improvement upon their present state. They are classed into two great divisions; the Mansoes, who have a fixed residence, cultivate the land, and maintain amicable relations with the other races; and the Bravoes, who live a wandering life, supported by hunting, avoiding intercourse with other tribes, and frequently at war with them and each other. They principally inhabit the northern states along the river Gila. An independent tribe, called Mayas, inhabits the tract between Yucatan, Tabasco, and Central America.

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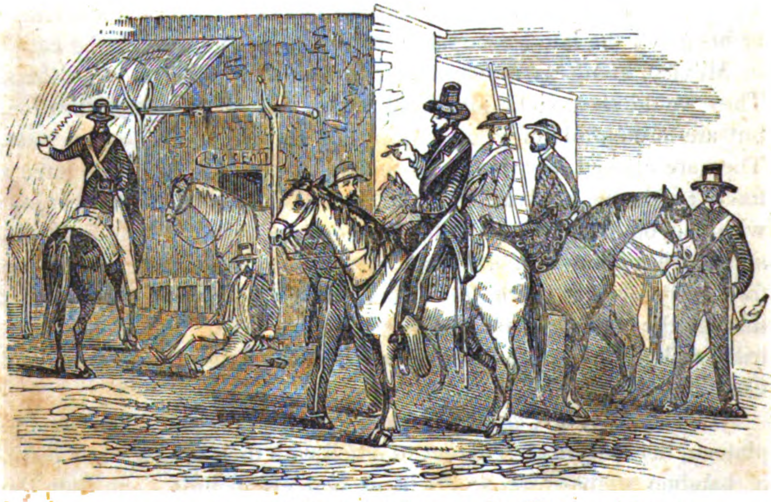
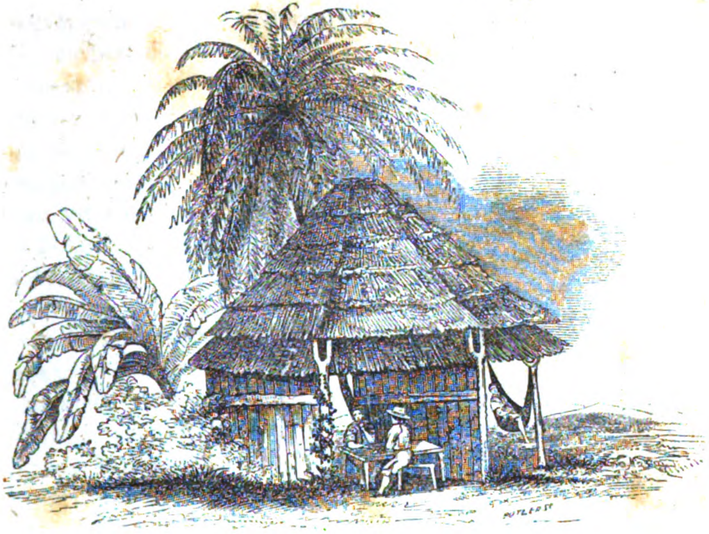
* Chevalier.

"In the *Tierras Calientes*," says Chevalier, "and even on the plateau, the natives are content to dwell with their families in a cabin of bamboo trellis-work, so slight as scarcely to hide them from the stranger's gaze, and to sleep either on mere mats, or at best on beds made of leaves and brushwood. Their dress consists simply of a pair of drawers or petticoat, and a *serape*, (a dyed woollen garment,) which serves for a cloak by day, and a counterpane by night. Each has his horse, a sorry beast, which feeds at large in the open country; and a whole family of Indians is amply supplied with food by bananas, chili, and maize, raised almost without labour, in a small inclosure round the hut. Labour, indeed, occupies but a trifling portion of the Indian's time, which is chiefly spent in drinking *pulque*, sleep, or singing to his wretched maudlins hymns in honour of Notre Dame de Guadalupe, and occasionally carrying votive chaplets to deck the altar of his village church. Thus he passes his life in dreamy indifference, and utterly careless of the ever-reviving *emeutes* by which the peace of Mexico is disturbed. The assassinations and robberies which the almost impotent government allows to be committed with impunity on the public roads, and even in sight of the capital, are to him only matter for conversation, the theme of a tale or ditty. And why should he trouble himself about it? Having nothing in the world but the dress in which he stands, his lance, spurs, and guitar, he has no fear of thieves; nor will the poniard of the assassin touch him, if he himself, drunk with pulque or chinga rito, do not use his own."



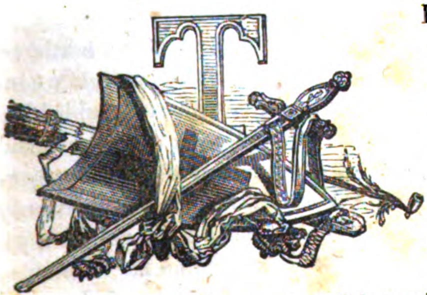
Mexican Cavalry at a Pulque shop, between San Martin and Puebla.



Indian hut, in the Tierra Caliente.

CHAPTER II.

THE AZTEC EMPIRE BEFORE THE CONQUEST.*



THE most conspicuous of the races that preceded the Aztecs or ancient Mexicans in the sovereignty of the territory of Anahuac, were the Toltecs. They advanced into the country from the northward about the close of the seventh century, and appear to have introduced many of the most useful mechanic arts, an improved system of agriculture, the working of metals, and so good a style of architecture that their name has become a synonyme for architect. They extended their sway over the whole territory of Anahuac, and after exercising their authority during a period of four centuries they silently and mysteriously disappeared. Famine, pestilence, and unsuccessful wars are assigned as the cause of their removal, and it is supposed, by some writers, that they passed into Central America, there to found Mitla, and the more famous Palenque, whose ruins have so well employed the graphic pen of our countryman, Stephens. The grounds of this supposition are found in the accounts given by the conquerors of the remains of their ancient capital, Tula, north of the Mexican valley, and the ruins of noble structures still found in the country and attributed to the Toltecs.

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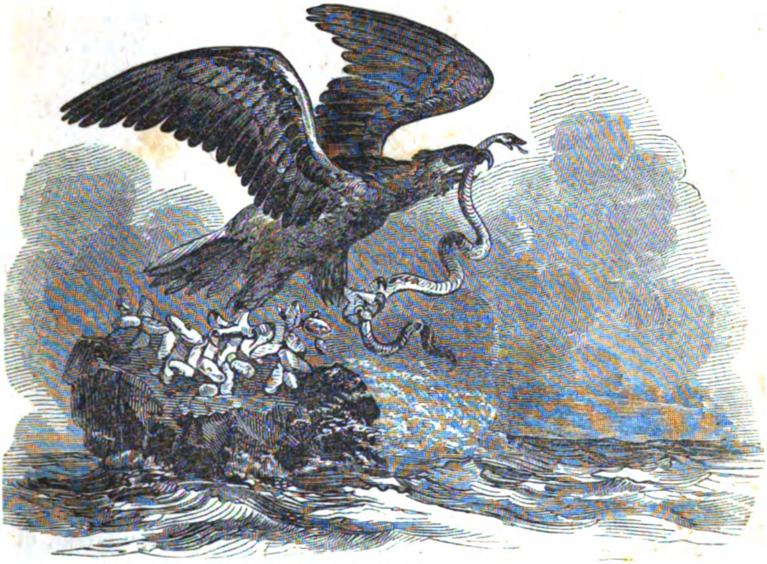
* As authority for this chapter we have relied entirely upon the First Book of Mr. Prescott's History of the Conquest of Mexico, (vol. i. pp. 3–208,) not because we had not at hand abundance of other material for the same purpose, but because we esteem Mr. Prescott the best possible authority, and his history incomparably the best of the ancient Mexicans and the Conquest.

A century after their disappearance a rude tribe called the Chichemecs, entered the country from the north-west, and were speedily followed by other races of higher civilization, who seem to have been of the same family with the Toltecs; the Aztecs, or Mexicans, and the Acolhuans, better known by their later name of Tezcucans, from that of their capital on the western border of the lake. The Tezcucans fraternized with the few remaining Toltecs, and became missionaries of civilization to the Chichemecs. The increase of strength derived from this union enabled the Acolhuans to extend their empire over the ruder tribes in the north; but the still more warlike kindred tribe of Tepanecs who inhabited the same valley, made an attack upon them, beat their armies, assassinated their king, and captured their metropolis. Nezahualcoyotl, the crown prince, displayed at this critical juncture the greatest ability, and by the timely aid of the Aztecs raised his race from this abject state to a new career of prosperity and glory.

These Aztecs had arrived from the remote regions of the north, on the borders of Anahuac, towards the beginning of the thirteenth century, but they wandered about for many years without establishing themselves. At one time they were enslaved by a more powerful tribe, but they regained their freedom, and finally ended their migration by founding, in 1325, the city of Tenochtitlan, now known only by its other name Mexico, derived from Mexitli, the appellation of their god of war. The translation of the former name is "a cactus, on a stone," and has reference to the miraculous origin of the city. The coat of arms of the Mexican republic, the eagle and the cactus also refers to this legend, which relates that on their arrival at the shores of the lake "they beheld perched on the stem of a prickly pear which shot out from the crevice of a rock washed by the waves, a royal eagle of extraordinary size and beauty, with a serpent in his talons, and his broad wings opened to the rising sun. They



The Mexican Coat of Arms.

hailed the auspicious omen announced by the oracle as indicating the site of their future city, and laid its foundations by sinking piles into the shallows; for the low marshes were half buried under water. Upon these they erected their light fabrics of reeds and rushes; and sought a precarious subsistence from fishing, and from the wild fowl which frequented the waters, as well as from the cultivation of such simple vegetables as they could raise on their floating gardens. * * * * * "Such," says the eloquent historian, "were the humble beginnings of the Venice of the western world."*

Domestic feuds rendered the condition of the new settlers still worse, and it was a long time before they could aspire to the acquisition of territory on the main land. The increase of their numbers, however, and their improvements in civilization and military discipline at length won for them a reputation for courage which inspired terror because they united with their bravery great cruelty. A hundred years after the foundation of their city, they assumed a new position and a different character among the tribes of the plain of Anahuac.

The assassination of the king of the Tezcucans and the capture of their chief city by the Tepanecs, would have terminated for ever the Tezcucan dynasty but for the character of Nezahualcoyotl, whose history for ten years after the murder of his father, when he was but

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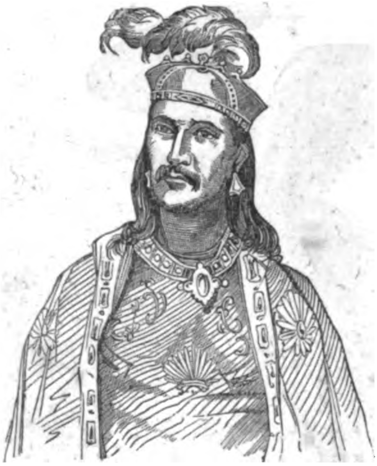
* Prescott, Conquest of Mexico.



Nezahualcoyotl.

fifteen years of age, is as romantic as that of Alfred the Great, of Scanderbeg, or of Charles the Second. The usurper was succeeded on the throne of the Tepanecs by his son Maxtla, a man of a fierce, suspicious, and tyrannical disposition, who awakened the sympathy of all classes by his incessant persecution of the royal prince, while he estranged the hearts of his subjects and neighbours from himself by his oppressions. Recalling to mind the mild rule of the Tezcucan princes, the people were beginning to sigh for their restoration at the moment when the active friends of the royal exile, loving him for his worth, were forming a coalition for his relief. An insurrection followed, Nezahualcoyotl soon found himself at the head of a strong force, with which he routed the Tepanec army, and seated himself on the re-established throne of Tezcuco. The Mexicans lent him their aid, and the allied powers, after several bloody battles, routed the usurper under the walls of his own capital. He fled to the baths, whence he was dragged forth to be sacrificed by the Aztecs. His city was razed to the ground, and his territories were awarded to the Mexicans in return for their valuable assistance.

A league offensive and defensive was then made between the three states, Tezcuco, Mexico, and Tlacopan, in agreement with the terms of which they all shared in each other's councils, embarked in each other's enterprises, and moved together until just before the coming of the Spaniards. This league provided for the distribution of the subjugated lands among the parties, and it is one of the most remarkable facts in history, that during a century of uninterrupted warfare which ensued, no quarrel occurred over the division of the spoil, but the treaty was maintained inviolate.

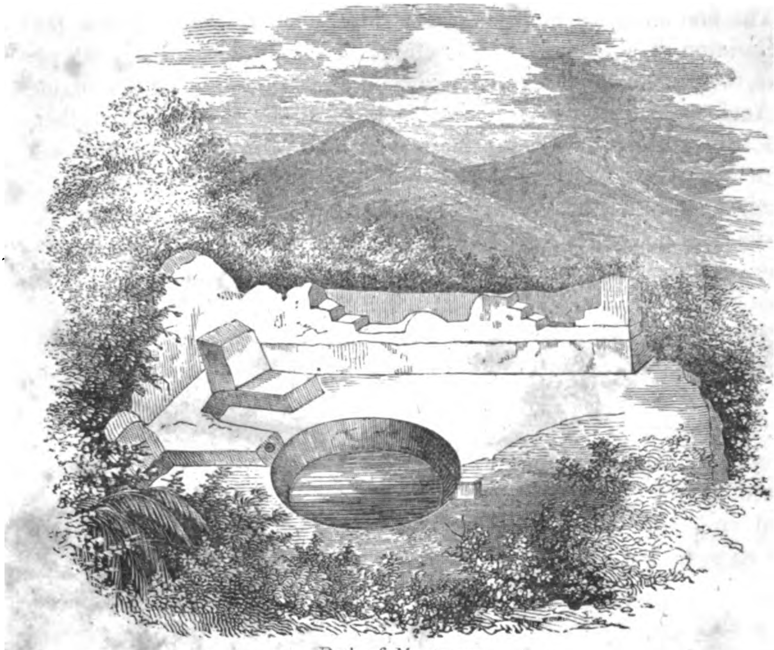
The first measure of Nezahualcoyotl, on his restoration, was the declaration of a general amnesty. He then established a code of laws, which, for their severity, entitle him to the name of the Draco of Anahuac, but which were esteemed so admirable that the other two tribes adopted them as their own. The duties of the government he divided among a number of departments, the Council of State, the Council of War, the Council of Finance, the Council of Justice, and, what is most remarkable, the Council of Music, whose province it was to encourage the arts and sciences, and to exercise a censorship over all works presented for publication, and to constitute a general board of education for the country. On stated days, historical compositions, poems, &c., were read before a session, which the three kings of the empire honoured with their presence.

"Architecture," says Mr. Prescott, "is the form in which the revenues of a semi-civilized people are most likely to be lavished. The most gaudy and ostentatious specimens of it, and sometimes the most stupendous have been reared by such hands. It is one of the first steps in the great march of civilization.

BUT the institution in question was evidence of still higher refinement. It was a literary luxury; and argued the existence of a taste in the nation, which relied for its gratification on pleasures of a purely intellectual character. Its influence was felt throughout the empire, and its institution fairly entitles the capital to the glory of being the Athens of the Western world.

"The Tezcucan monarch himself entered the field of literary competition as a poet, and specimens of his works, preserved by his descendants, evince signal ability. But his time was not wholly given to the labours of the study and the cabinet. The camp received an equal share of his attention. He led the armies of the allied nations in their annual expeditions in person, and annually enlarged his realm and its resources. The captives taken in war were employed as labourers on the public works, and the immense royal palace and the villas of the king. These latter were embellished with all that could make a rural retreat delightful, and some remains of their magnificence are still extant, among which, an excavation in the solid porphyry is shown to the traveller by the ignorant people as the Bath of Montezuma."

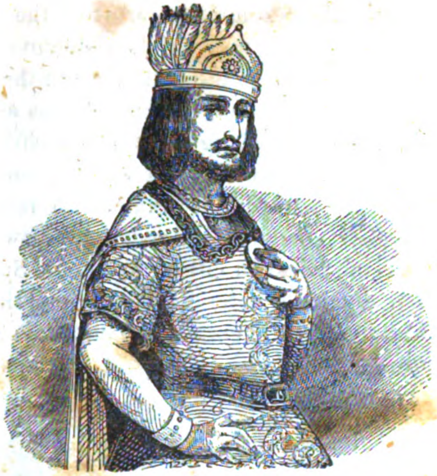
The history of Nezahualcoyotl has been preserved by his son and grandson, and repeated from their accounts by a later descendant,



Bath of Montezuma.

Ixtlilxochitl. It is filled with the most pleasing anecdotes of his clemency and justice, and on the other hand narrates as the basest action in their ancestor's life, an account of his obtaining to wife the betrothed of another by sending him to be slain in battle against the Tlascalans. This lady he made his wife, but for a long time had no issue by her. He at length suffered himself to be persuaded by the priests to endeavour to propitiate the gods by a human sacrifice, but it was of none effect, and the king exclaimed, "These idols of wood and stone can neither hear nor feel; much less could they make the heavens, and the earth, and man, the lord of it. These must be the work of the all powerful and unknown God, creator of the universe, on whom alone I must rely for consolation and support."

He withdrew to his rural palace of Tezcotzinco, and commenced the worship of "the unknown God, the cause of causes," by a fast of forty days, offering no other sacrifices than the incense of copal and aromatic herbs and gums. He afterwards built a temple to the invisible God, without images. Shortly after his abandonment of idolatry, his desires for an heir were realized, an event which tended still further to fix him in his new faith. As he grew old, he retired to the delicious solitudes of Tezcotzinco, where he devoted himself to study and to meditation on his immortal destiny.



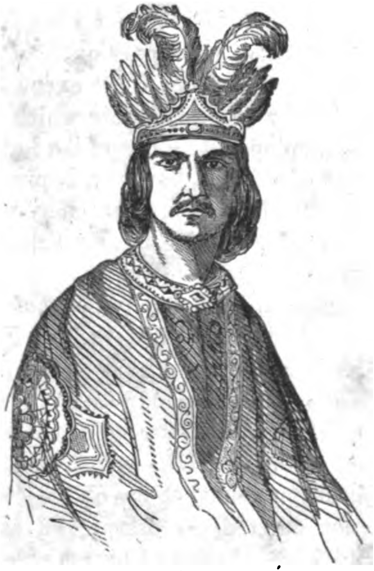
Nezahualpilli.

His death occurred about the year 1470, nearly half a century after the commencement of his reign. He was succeeded on the throne by his son, Nezahualpilli, then only eight years of age. This prince was only less remarkable than his father for his wisdom, piety, and rigid justice. Of the latter, we need only quote as an example the delivery of his eldest son into the hand of the executioner, in accordance with the sentence of the tribunal before which he was brought for maintaining a correspondence with one of the ladies of the court. That he had the feelings of a father, however, is proved by his grief at the occurrence. He shut himself up for many weeks, and commanded the doors and windows of his son's residence to be walled up, that it might never again be occupied.

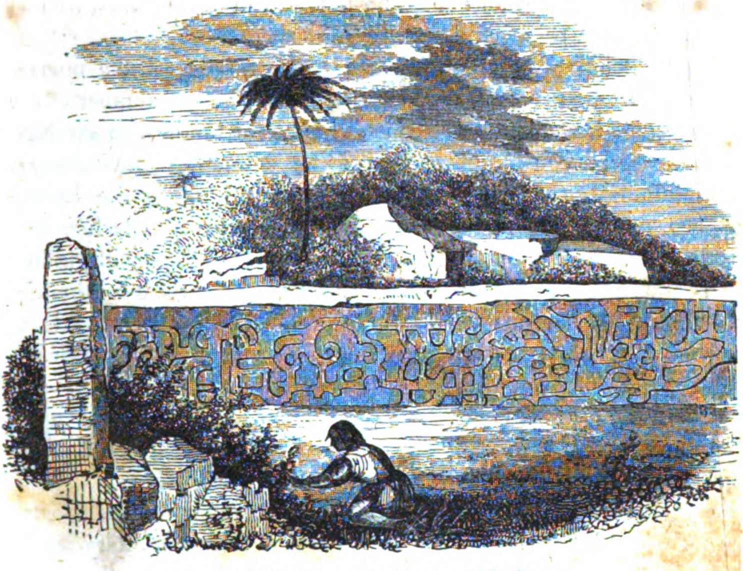
Nezahualpilli was warlike in his youth, but became more and more wedded to the pursuit of learning as he advanced in years. Astronomical lore was his chief delight, and he spent the most of his time in the study of that science, and the enjoyment of the pleasures of Tezcotzinco. This quiet life, however, did not accord with the temper of the times, nor with that of the wily head of the Aztec race, Montezuma. The distant provinces threw off their allegiance; disaffection and turbulence entered the army; and Montezuma, by a mixture of cunning and force, plundered his amiable rival of a large part of his most valuable domains, and then arrogated to himself the title and supremacy of emperor, which the Tezcucan princes had heretofore borne by virtue of their position as head of the alliance.

These misfortunes hastened the death of Nezahualpilli, who sank into the grave in 1515, at the age of fifty-two.

Under the sway of Montezuma, the arms of the allied nations, which had before extended the imperial dominion over all the valley, spread his rule down the sides of the table-land to the borders of the Gulf of Mexico. The progress of the empire was accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the capital, Tenochtitlan, which extended itself over an area exceeding that which it now occupies. A succession of able princes filled the throne, who returned annually from the scenes of their conquests, attended by crowds of captives, laden with the spoils of their own cities. When the Spaniards landed on their coast, their dominion extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific, and into the farthest corners of Guatimala and Nicaragua, whither their arms had been led by the great Ahuitzotl



Ahuitzotl.



Sculptured stone in Monte of Mapilca.

CHAPTER III.

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE AZTECS.

THE advance in civilization brought about among the Tezcucans by the good Nezahualcoyotl and his successor has already been noticed. We come now to view the social condition of the Aztec race, whose increase in wealth had early produced a love of pomp and magnificence in their modes of living and in their structures. Their government was an elective monarchy. The sovereign was chosen from the brothers or nephews of the deceased prince, by an electoral body of four nobles, who chose their own successors. The necessary qualifications must of course be possessed by a candidate who would hope to be successful under such a system, and its practical results made its advantages apparent. Able princes succeeded each other and guided the warlike and ambitious people successfully to conquest and glory. The rule seems to have been to choose a man distinguished in war, but an exception is found in Montezuma, who was a member of the priesthood.

The ceremony of coronation was not performed until the monarch returned from a victorious campaign, with a sufficient number of captives to grace his entry, and furnish victims for the human sacrifices, which formed a considerable part of the ceremonies attending his installation. The crown was placed on his head by the king of Tezcuco, as the most powerful of his subject allies. The legislative power rested wholly with the monarch, the executive with judicial tribunals, the higher authorities being appointed for life by the king, but wholly independent of the crown when in office, while the lower magistrates were chosen by the people. The king was assisted in the government by a number of bodies of councillors, the chief of which was a sort of privy council, composed of the four nobles who chose the successor to the crown. It appears that the most important offices and the governments of the provinces and cities were engrossed by the nobles, who mostly resided on their estates like independent princes, but were obliged to render military service, and according to some authorities, to keep hostages at the capital. In the courts, no counsel was employed, the parties stating their own case, and bringing forward their own witnesses. The clerk kept a record of the proceedings in hieroglyphical writing, which was handed over to the court; in capital cases, where a criminal was condemned to death, the death warrant was issued by drawing an arrow over his picture in the record of the proceedings. Death was the punishment for almost every offence in civil and in military life, and among capital crimes was ranked intemperance.

SLAVERY existed in the community, under more liberal regulations than ever attended it elsewhere. The slaves were of four classes, prisoners of war, who were reserved for public sacrifice, criminals, public debtors, voluntary slaves, and children sold by their parents, the two latter classes resulting from the poverty of individuals. The slave was allowed to have his own family, to hold property, and to have other slaves, and his children were always born *free*. Poverty of the master was the only reason for the sale of a slave, except the latter's own bad conduct; the second time viciousness rendered the sale of a slave necessary, he was liable to be reserved for sacrifice. The royal income appears to have been raised by direct taxation upon the agriculture and manufactures of the realm, the assessment being frequently paid in kind

Defaulting taxables were liable to be sold as slaves, and with the increased magnificence of the court, the taxes became so heavy, that many of the subjects of Montezuma welcomed the arrival of the Spaniards as deliverers. Despatches were borne by trained couriers, from station to station, with such speed that a message could be transmitted from one to two hundred miles a day, and this system was so complete that the court was kept in constant receipt of intelligence respecting the movements and success of the armies.

The tutelary deity of the Aztecs was the God of war, and the chief aim of their institutions was to foster and elevate the profession of arms. The king must needs be a successful warrior, and the nobles and even the members of the royal family were prohibited from wearing other than a coarse dress, until by their deeds they had established a title to admission into the order of knighthood, which had been formed. The magnificence of dress of the warriors corresponded with their rank, and in the army promotion was open to all. The lower orders were stimulated to deeds of heroism by the assurance that the soldier slain in battle was admitted immediately to the enjoyment of eternal happiness in the bright regions of the sun. Their great object in battle was to make captives, in order that their deity might have victims, and the valour of a warrior was estimated by the number of his prisoners. These were never scalped. Their discipline drew forth encomiums from their Spanish adversaries, and the skill of the surgeons in their well established hospitals no doubt merited the praise bestowed on them by the old chronicler, who preferred them to the surgeons of Europe, because "they did not protract the cure in order to increase the pay."*

IN their religion, the Aztecs recognized the existence of a supreme being of sublime attributes, to whom was added thirteen principal deities, and some two hundred inferior, each with a particular function. At the head of all was the war-god, Huitzilopotchli, the patron deity of the nation, whose altars reeked with the blood of hecatombs of human victims in every city. Quetzalcoatl was the god of the air, who taught them the use of metals, and agriculture, and the art of government, whose terrestrial residence in fact formed the golden age of Anahuac. He incurred the anger of one of the principal deities, and was banished the country. On his way, he stopped at Cholula, where are still found the interesting ruins of a temple dedicated to his worship.† When he embarked from the shores of the

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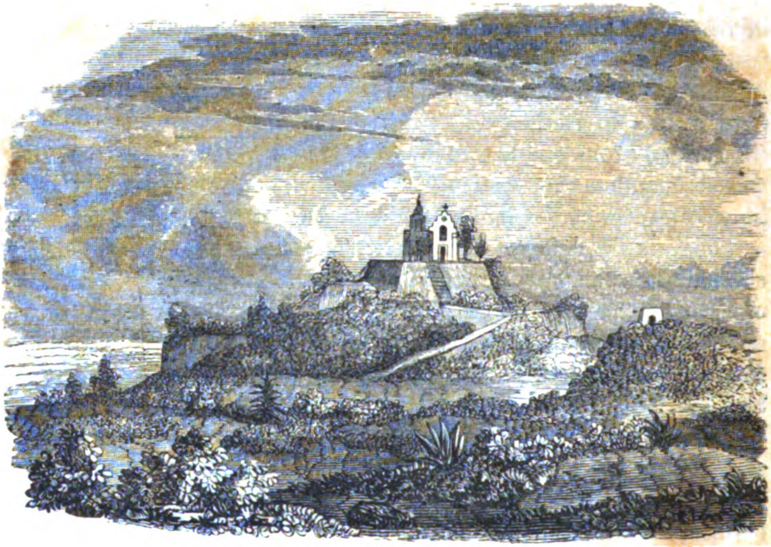
* Prescott's Conquest of Mexico, vol. i. 48.

† This celebrated monument is thus described by Baron Humboldt:

"The pyramid of Cholula," says he, "is exactly of the same height as that of Tonatiuh



Pyramid of Cholula.

gulf, in his boat made of serpents' skins, he bade his followers farewell, promising to return to them at some future day with his descendants. This remarkable tradition was universally known, and the promised return was constantly expected; a circumstance which proved of considerable advantage to the Spaniards.*

In their ideas of a future state, the Mexicans evinced a degree of progress that seems to be attributable to the Tezcucans, so incongruous is it with the other parts of their religious creed.

The wicked were consigned after death to a place of everlasting darkness; those who died of certain diseases, were subjected to an existence of indolent contentment; while those who fell in battle or died on the sacrificial stone, were transported at once to the presence of the sun, whom they accompanied for some years in his course

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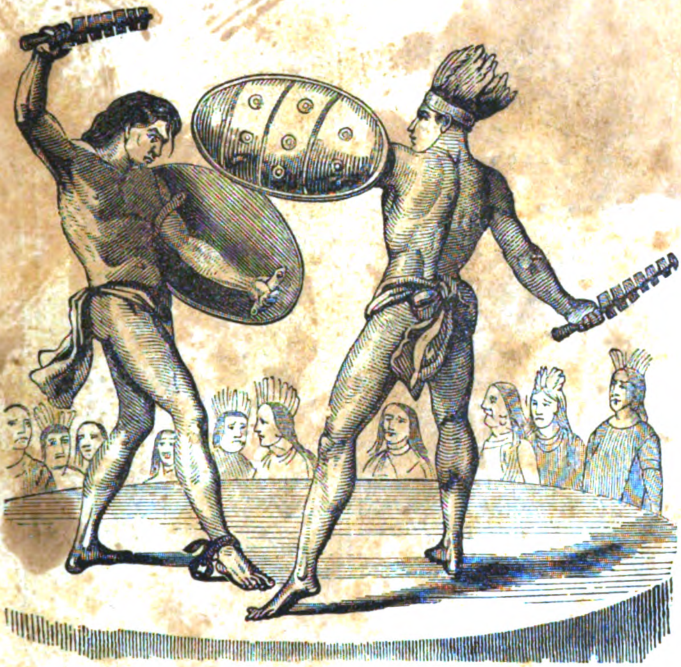
Ytxaqual at Teotihuacan. It is three metres higher than that of Mycerinus, or the third of the great Egyptian pyramids of the group of Djizeh. Its base, however, is larger than that of any pyramid hitherto discovered by travellers in the old world, and is double of that known as the pyramid of Cheops.

Those who wish to form an idea of the immense mass of this Mexican monument by the comparison of objects best known to them, may imagine a square four times greater than that of the Place Vendome, in Paris, covered with layers of bricks, rising to twice the elevation of the Louvre. Some persons imagine that the whole of the edifice is not artificial; but as far as explorations have been made, there is no reason to doubt that it is entirely a work of art. In its present state, (and we are ignorant of its perfect original height,) its perpendicular proportion is to its base as eight to one, while in the three great pyramids of Djizeh, the proportion is found to be one six-tenths to one seven-tenths to one; or nearly as eight to five.

* Prescott, vol. i. 60.



Gladiatorial Sacrifice.

Anahuac, cast it at the feet of the deity to whom the temple was devoted, while the multitudes below prostrated themselves in humble adoration. The tragic story of this prisoner was expounded by the priests as the type of human destiny, which brilliant in its commencement, too often closes in sorrow and disaster."*

This was the ordinary mode of human sacrifice. Another, which has been termed the gladiatorial sacrifice, was conducted in this manner. The victim, being chained by one foot, was compelled to fight a succession of champions. If he vanquished them all, he escaped. If he failed, his life, of course, paid the forfeit.

The Aztecs were acquainted with all kinds of hieroglyphical writing, but they confined themselves principally to the lowest stage of figurative or picture writing. Had their empire continued long in existence, they would probably have followed the course of the Egyptians, and used the system known by the term *phonetic*, in which signs are made to represent sounds. The conquest of their empire made them acquainted with the alphabetical system of the Spaniards. However clumsy their system was, it sufficed for recording their

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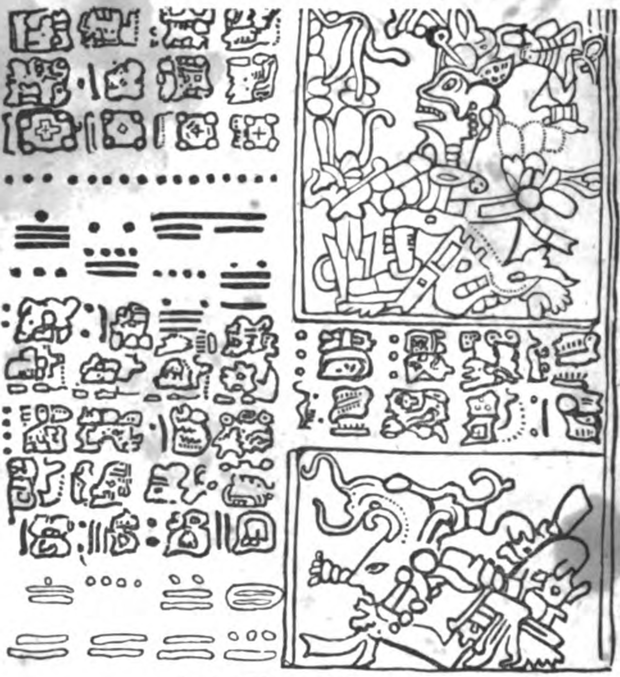
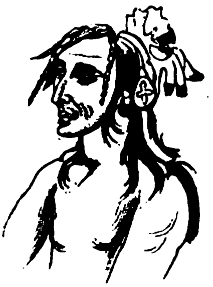
* Conquest of Mexico, vol. i. pp. 72–77.



Ancient Mexican Manuscript.

laws, domestic regulations, public decrees, mythology, calendars, rituals, and historical annals. Their system of chronology was so good that they could specify with accuracy the dates of the most important events in their history. In order to estimate aright the literature of the people, the picture writing should be considered in connection with the traditions of the priests who taught it, and to which it was only auxiliary. These manuscripts were made of the leaves of the aloe chiefly, but cotton cloth, prepared skins, and a composition of silk and gum were made to answer the purpose. They were sometimes made into rolls, but most frequently folded up, like a folding screen, into volumes, the pages of which might be referred to and read separately. Unfortunately the Spaniards looked upon these manuscripts as magic scrolls, and destroyed them as the symbols of superstition. Don Juan de Zumarraga, the first archbishop of Mexico, collected from all parts of the empire, and especially from the national archives in Tezcuco, a "mountain-heap" of these works, and reduced them all to ashes. The Spanish soldiers vied with each other in imitating this example, and the surviving memorials of Mexican civilization are extremely rare, and scattered over the world, excepting in Spain, where there are none.

Their system of arithmetical notation was very simple, yet, perhaps, better adapted to the purpose than any other arrangement in use before the introduction of the Arabic cyphers. "The whole eastern world, "to use the words of Niebuhr, "has followed the moon in its calendar, the free scientific divisions of a large portion of time is peculiar to the west." Such a division was that employed in the Mexican calendar, which so exactly adjusted civil to solar time, that five centuries would elapse, according to Mr. Prescott's showing, before there would be the loss of a single day. "Such," he adds, "was the astonishing precision displayed by the Aztecs, or perhaps by their more polished Toltec predecessors, in these computations so difficult as to have baffled, till a comparatively recent period, the most enlightened nations of Christendom."* Besides the solar calendar, the priests constructed another for themselves, not less ingenious, which they used in the arrangement of their festivals, and in their astrological and astronomical pursuits. Of their proficiency in these studies we know little more than that they knew the causes of eclipses, and were able to settle the hours of the day, the periods of the solstices, and of the equinoxes, and that of the transit of the sun across the zenith of Mexico, with precision.†


Mexican Indian, from Catlin.

THE Mexicans paid much attention to agriculture and botany, and their collections probably suggested the formation of the gardens of plants which began to appear in Europe soon after the time of the conquest. The mineral kingdom also excited their attention, and they worked mines with a considerable degree of skill. Iron, however, was unknown to them, and their tools were made of an alloy of tin and copper, and of a mineral substance called *itztli*. With implements of this latter material they wrought the stones employed in constructing their public works and dwellings, and the sculptures so frequently dug up in Mexico. The most remarkable of these is the great calendar stone dug up in 1790, and now walled against the base of one of the towers of the cathedral, where it passes by the name of Montezuma's watch. It is eleven feet eight inches in diameter, and the figures are raised seven and a half inches above the broken square of rock out of which the whole was originally carved. It is computed to have weighed nearly fifty tons. They had carried

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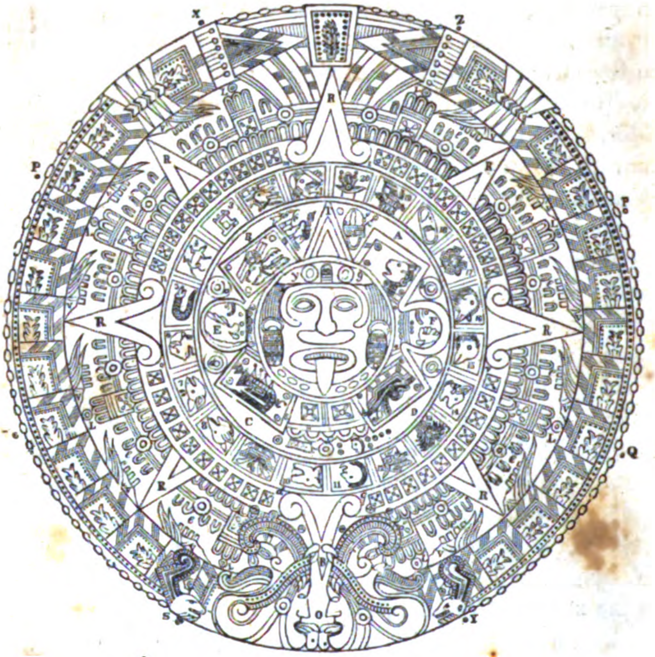
* Prescott, vol. i. p. 113.

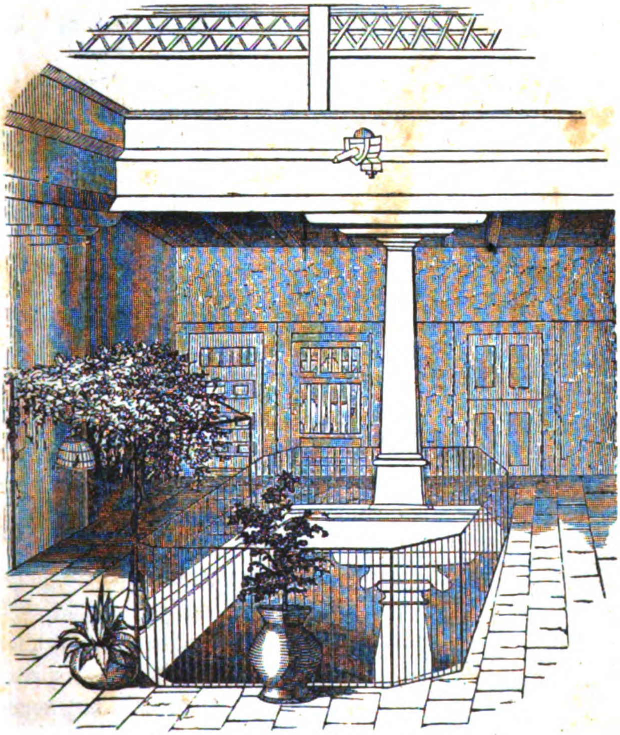
† Humboldt; Gallatin, in the first volume of the Philosophical Transaction of American Ethnological Society.



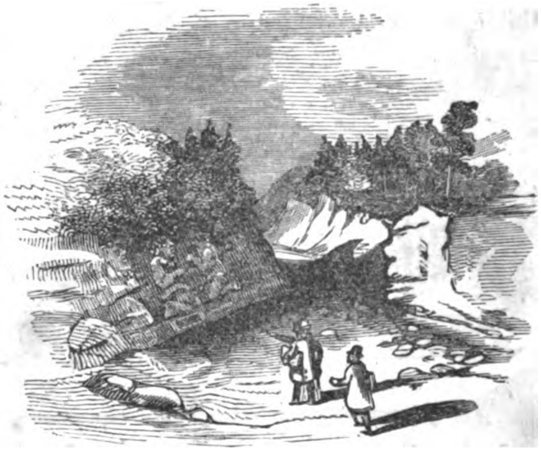
Great Calendar Stone.

to great perfection the art of working in gold and silver, and were well skilled in other mechanical arts. Every fifth day fairs were held in the market-places of the principal cities, where the people from the neighbourhood met to sell and buy. They traded partly by barter and partly by means of a rude but regulated currency. Trade was greatly respected as a means of livelihood, but the mechanical arts were held in esteem, and, as there were no castes, the nobles were expected to have a useful calling as well as the lowly born. The merchants who went trading into other countries, went with large bodies of servants well armed, and they acted as spies for the government, and any indignity offered them would easily furnish a pretext to the Aztec rulers for a war, when the stock of victims for sacrifice was low. In their domestic life, women mingled unreservedly among the men in social festivities and entertainments, and were always tenderly treated. They were somewhat fastidious in their cooking, and when the body of a sacrificed victim was given to the warrior who had captured him, to be eaten, the repast was served up with many beverages and viands of delicacy, and the feast was conducted with all the decorum of civilized life.

Such was the strangely compounded character of the people whose arms were to be vainly dashed against the mail-clad adventurers under Cortes, who now came to overturn their whole social system, and replace it with another, which, though it was almost equally crushing from the weight of its own superstition on one hand, still held to the Bible on the other, the sublime truths of which, the reign of fanaticism ended, could not fail to expel the many forms of evil which had infested the fair plain of Anahuac.



Interior of a modern Mexican house.



CHAPTER IV.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF MEXICO.

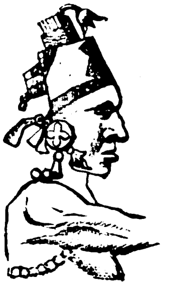
BEFORE proceeding to our account of the conquest of Mexico, by Cortes, we will notice some of the remarkable remains of antiquity with which this country abounds. Our limits are narrow, and our notice of these remains must necessarily be slight and general; but the ancient ruins present altogether too remarkable a feature in the aspect of the country to be passed over in any account of it, however summary.

We have already observed that Mexico is a country of which comparative little is known. The jealous policy of the Spaniards rendered its geography and history almost a sealed book, during their domination; and perpetual disturbances, since the revolution, have rendered explorations, by foreign travellers, almost impracticable. Until Baron Humboldt visited the country very little was known of the antiquities which are so numerous in Mexico proper, while the wonderful treasures of art, which lie mouldering in Central America and Yucatan, were not fully revealed to us until our own countrymen, Stephens and Norman, explored, delineated, and described them.

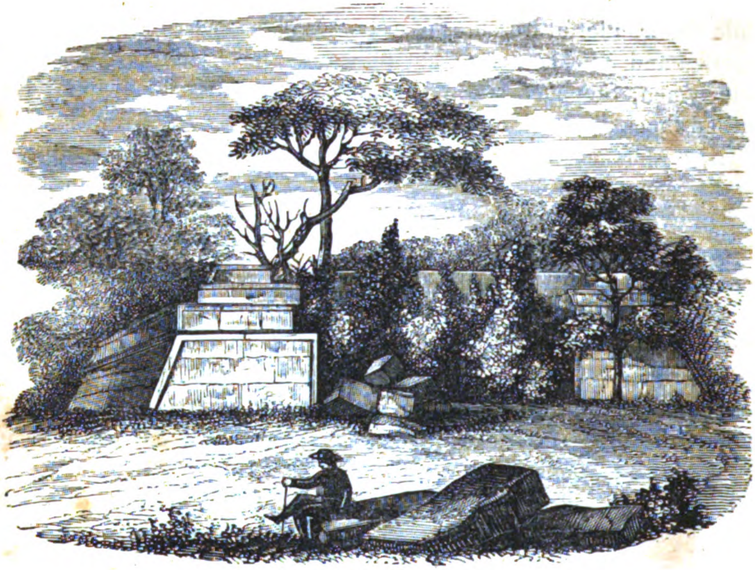
These remains, as well as many of those in Mexico proper, are generally referred to a people more ancient than any of those which are known even to the earliest historians of Anahuac. They cannot be the work of the Aztecs, who founded the city of Mexico, in 1325, nor is there much better ground for referring their origin to the earlier visiters from the north, the Acolhuans, Chichemecs, Toltecs, or their predecessors, the Ulmecs. They are apparently the work of a people whose existence is not recorded in any history, the cotemporaries, perhaps, of those giant architects, the shepherd kings of Egypt, the founders of those massy monuments which astonish the traveller in Memphis and Thebes.

Of the origin of the pyramid of Cholula, which we have already noticed, the Aztec chroniclers give a circumstantial account; but their date of its origin is at that remote period when the Mexicans, like the Greeks, Egyptians, and all other ancient nations, had their gods dwelling among them, the mythological age, fruitful in marvels of every kind. The great temple of Mexico, already noticed, was comparatively modern. Its existence began with the priests of the bloody religion of the Aztecs, and ended with their empire.

For an account of some of the more remarkable ruins in Mexico proper, which we subjoin, we are indebted to the lively and entertaining work of Brantz Mayer, Esq., of Baltimore, entitled, "Mexico, As it Was and As it Is." The following is extracted from his description of the ruins of the pyramid of Xochicalco.


Ancient Mexican, from the Monuments.

"AT the distance of six leagues from the city of Cuernavaca lies a *cerro*, three hundred feet in height, which, with the ruins that crown it, is known by the name of Xochicalco, or the "Hill of Flowers." The base of this eminence is surrounded by the very distinct remains of a deep and wide ditch; its summit is attained by five spiral terraces; the walls that support them are built of stone, joined by cement, and are still quite perfect; and at regular distances, as if to buttress these terraces, there are remains of bulwarks shaped like the bastions of a fortification. The summit of the hill is a wide esplanade, on the eastern side of which are still perceptible three truncated cones, resembling the *tumuli* found



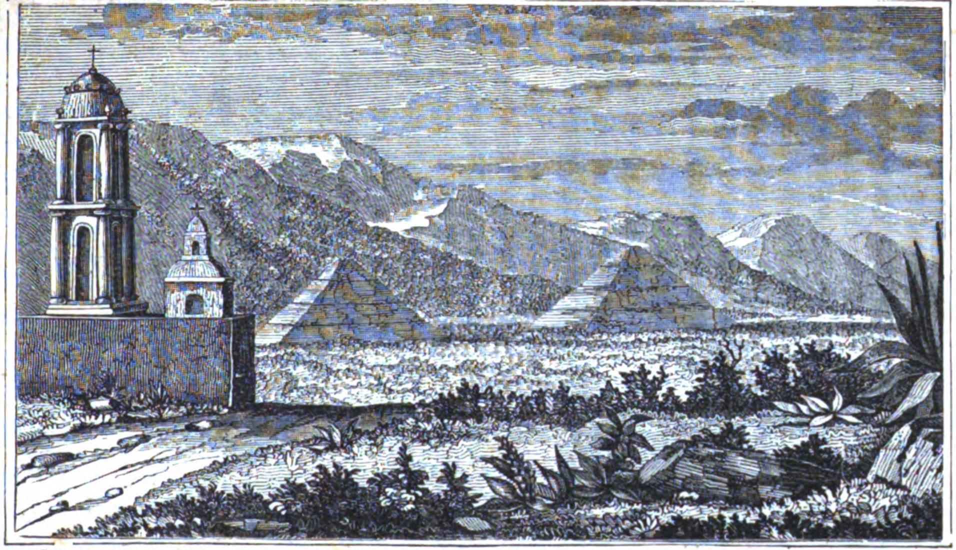
Ruins of Xochicalco.

among many similar ruins in Mexico. On the other sides there are also large heaps of loose stones of irregular shape, which seem to have formed portions of similar mounds or *tumuli*, or, perhaps, parts of fortifications in connection with the wall that is alleged by the old writers to have surrounded the base of the pyramid, but of which I could discern no traces.

"The stones forming parts of the conical remains, have evidently been shaped by the hand of art, and are often found covered with an exterior coat of mortar, specimens of which I took away with me, as sharp and perfect as the day it was laid on centuries ago.

"Near the base of the last terrace, on which the pyramid rises, the esplanade is covered with trees and tangled vines, but the body of the platform is cultivated as a corn-field. We found the Indian owner at work in it, and were supplied by him with the long-desired comfort of a gourd of water. He pointed out to us the way to the summit of the terrace through the thick brambles; and rearing our horses up the crumbling stones of the wall, we stood before the ruins of this interesting pyramid, the remains of which, left by the neighbouring planters after they had borne away enough to build the walls of their haciendas, now lie buried in a grove of palmettoes, bananas, and forest-trees, apparently the growth of many hundred years

"Indeed, this pyramid seems to have been (like the Forum and Colliseum at Rome,) the quarry for all the builders in the vicinity



Pyramids of San Juan.

and Alzate, who visited it as far back as 1777, relates, that *not more than twenty years before, the five terraces of which it consisted, were still perfect;* and that on the eastern side of the upper platform there had been a magnificent throne carved from porphyry, and covered with hieroglyphics of the most graceful sculpture. Soon after this period, however, the work of destruction was begun by a certain Estrada, and it is not more than a couple of years since one of the wealthiest planters of the neighbourhood ended the line of spoilers by carrying off enormous loads of the squared and sculptured materials, to build a tank in a barranca to bathe his cattle! All that now remains of the five stories, terraces, or bodies of the pyramid, are portions *of the first,* the whole of which is of dressed porphyritic rock, covered with singular figures and hieroglyphics executed in a skilful manner. The engraving on page 50 presents a general view of the ruins as seen from the westward.

"The basement is a rectangular building, and its dimensions on the northern front, measured above the plinth, are sixty-four feet in length, by fifty-eight in depth on the western front. The height between the plinth and frieze is nearly ten feet; the breadth of the frieze is three feet and a half, and of the cornice one foot and five inches. I placed my compass on the wall, and found the lines of the edifice to correspond exactly with the cardinal points."

Of the ruins of the pyramid of Teotihuacan, Mr. Mayer gives the following account:

"On leaving the town our road lay in a north-easterly direction, through a number of picturesque villages buried in foliage, and fenced with the *organ cactus,* lifting its tall pillar-like stems to a height of twenty feet above the ground. The country was rolling, and we passed over several elevations and a stream or two before we turned suddenly to the right, and saw the village of St. Juan with an extensive level beyond it, bordered on all sides by mountains, except toward the east, where a deep depression in the chain leads into the plains of Otumba. In the centre of this level are the pyramids of Teotihuacan, and the opposite engraving will give you an accurate idea of their position and present appearance from this point.

"After we passed through the village, the high road was soon lost among paths leading between the walled fields of Indian farmers. At short distances, as we advanced in the direction of the pyramids, I observed evident traces of a well-made ancient road, covered with several inches of a close and hard cement, which, in turn, was often overlaid with a foot or two of soil. We crossed the plain, and, in a quarter of an hour, stood at the foot of the *Tonatiuh Ytzagual,* or, "House of the Sun," the base line of which is six hundred and eighty-two feet, and the perpendicular height, two hundred and twenty-one.*

"There is no other description of these monuments to be given than by saying that *they are pyramids, three stories or stages of which are yet distincty visible.* The whole of their exteriors is covered with a thick growth of *nopals* or prickly pears; and, in many places, I discovered the remains of the coating of cement with which they were encrusted in the days of their perfection. A short distance north-westwardly from the 'House of the Sun,' is the *Metzli Ytzagual*, or 'House of the Moon,' with a height of one hundred and forty-four feet. On the level summits of both of these, there were erected, no doubt, the shrines of the gods and the places of sacrifice.

"I ascended, clambering among the bushes and loose stones with uncertain footing, to the top of the 'House of the Sun.' The view from it was exceedingly picturesque over the cultivated fields to the east and south. Immediately to the south were a number of mound-like clusters, running toward a number of elevations arranged in a square, beyond the streamlet of *Teotihuacan*, and bordering the road that leads to Otumba. On the western front there were also five or six tumuli extending toward a long line of similar mounds, running from the southern side of the 'House of the Moon.' These lines were quite distinct, and the whole plain was more or less covered with heaps of stones. It is extremely probable, that at one time they all formed the sepulchres of the distinguished men of the empire, and constituted the *Micoatl*, or 'Path of the Dead'—a name which they bore in the ancient language of the country. It was the Westminster Abbey of the Toltecs and Aztecs."

Mr. Mayer's account of the aqueduct of Tezcosingo, is very interesting He says:

"Directly at the foot of the eminence on which we rested, there was an extensive Indian remain. By an able system of engineering, the water had been brought by the ancients from the eastern sierra, for a distance, probably, of three leagues, by conduits across barrancas and along the sides of the hill; and the ruin below us was that of one of these aqueducts, across a ravine about a hundred feet in elevation.

"You will find a view of this work in the opposite picture. The base of the two conduit pipes is raised to the required level on stones and masonry, and the canals for the water are made of an exceedingly hard cement, of mortar and fragments of pounded brick. Although, of course, long since abandoned, it is, in many places, as

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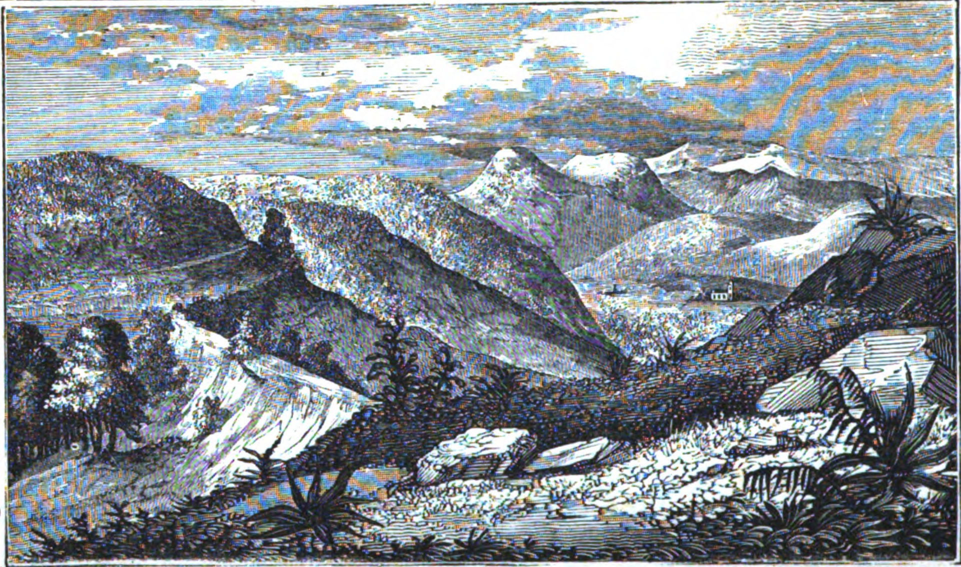
* Glennie.



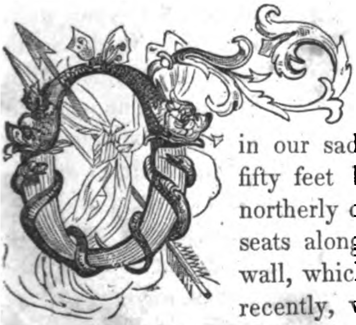
Ancient Aqueduct,
from the Mountain of Tezcosingo.

perfect as on the day of its completion; and perhaps as good a work, for all the necessary purposes, as could be formed at the present day by the most expert engineers.

"The view over the valley, to the north, towards the pyramids of Teotihuacan, and across the lake to Mexico, was uninterrupted; and the city (beyond the waters, surrounded by a *mirage* on the distant plain) seemed placed again, as it was three hundred years ago, in the midst of a beautiful lake.

"After we had finished our meal, we gave a small compensation to the Indian, and resumed our route toward Tezcosingo. The road, for a long distance, lay over an extensive table-land, with a deep valley north and south, filled on both sides with haciendas, villages, and plantations. We crossed the shoulder of a mountain, and descended half way a second ravine, near the eighth of a mile in extent, until we struck the level of another ancient aqueduct, that led the waters directly to the hill of Tezcosingo. This elevation was broader, firmer, and even in better preservation, than the first. It may be crossed on horseback—three abreast.

"As soon as we struck the celebrated hill, we began ascending rapidly, by an almost imperceptible cattle-path, among gigantic *cacti*, whose thorns tore our skins as we brushed by them. Over the whole surface, there were remains of a spiral road cut from the living rock, strewn with fragments of pottery, Indian arrows, and broken sacrificial knives; while, occasionally, we passed over the ruins of an aqueduct winding round the hill. The eminence seems to have been converted, from its base to its summit, (a distance of perhaps five hundred feet,) into a pile of those terraced gardens, so much admired by every tourist who falls into raptures among the romantic groves of Isola Bella.



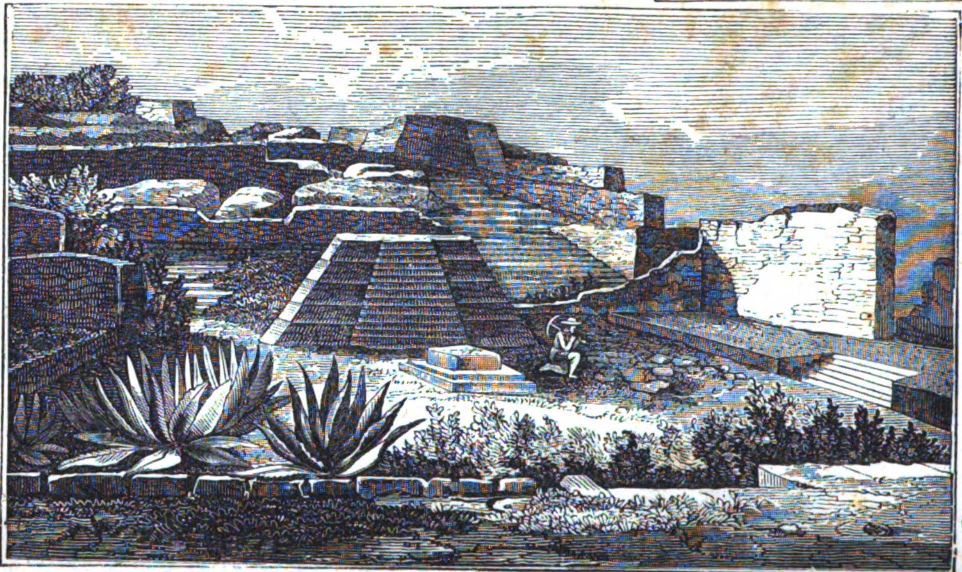
OUR horses seemed to be better accustomed to the dangerous clambering among these steeps, than ourselves, and we therefore continued in our saddles until we reached a point about fifty feet below the summit, where, in a due northerly direction, the rock had been cut into seats along a recess leading to a perpendicular wall, which is said to have been covered, until recently, with a Toltec calendar. When the Indians found that a place otherwise so unattractive, was visited by foreigners, they immediately imagined their ancestors had concealed treasures behind the stone; as they supposed that gold, and not mere curiosity, could have lured strangers from a distance to so unsightly a spot. They consequently destroyed the carved rock in order to penetrate the hill, and there is now not a fragment of the ancient sculpture remaining. In the hole burrowed by the treasure-finders, we discovered a number of Indians, of both sexes, sheltering themselves from the rain; and as they had a supply of *nopals*, (with which the surrounding rocks are covered,) we were not loth to dismount, and, forgetting our indignation for the moment, crawled into their cavern to enjoy the luscious fruit.

"A few steps upward led us to the summit of Tezcosingo. I found there no remains of a temple or edifice; but as the hill is supposed to have been formerly dedicated to the bloody rites of Indian worship, modern piety has thought proper to purify the spot by the erection of a cross. And never was one built on a more majestic and commanding site. From its foot the entire valley, lake, Tezcuco, Mexico, and lakes far to the north, were distinctly visible, and the beauty of the panorama was greatly increased by the sudden clearing of the skies, and an outburst of the setting sun."

The ruins of Quemada, lying north of the city of Mexico, in the department of Zacatecas, are very extensive, and must be referred to a very remote period of antiquity. The view of a portion of them, which we give, embraces the court-yard of a temple, as drawn by M. Nebel. Captain Lyon, quoted by Mr. Mayer, describes them in the following terms:

"We set out," says he, "on our expedition to the Cerro de los Edificios, under the guidance of an old ranchero, and soon arrived at the foot of the abrupt and steep rock on which the buildings are situated. Here we perceived two ruined heaps of stones, flanking the entrance to a causeway ninety-three feet broad, commencing at four hundred feet from the cliff.

"A space of about six acres has been inclosed by a broad wall, of which the foundations are still visible, running first to the south and afterward to the east. Off its south-western angle stands a high mass of stones, which flanks the causeway. In outward appearance it is of a pyramidal form, owing to the quantities of stones piled against it either by design or by its own ruin; but on closer examination its figure could be traced by the remains of solid walls, to have been a square of thirty-one feet by the same height: the heap immediately opposite is lower and more scattered, but in all probability formerly resembled it. Hence the grand causeway runs to the north-east until it reaches the ascent of the cliff, which, as I have already observed, is about four hundred yards distant. Here again are found two masses of ruins, in which may be traced the same construction as that before described; and it is not improbable that



Ruins of Quemada.

these two towers guarded the inner entrance to the citadel. In the centre of the causeway, which is raised about a foot, and has its rough pavement uninjured, is a large heap of stones, as if the remains of some altar; round which we could trace, notwithstanding the accumulation of earth and vegetation, a paved border of flat slabs arranged in the figure of a six-rayed star.

"We did not enter the city by the principal road, but led our horses, with some difficulty, up the steep mass formed by the ruins of a defensive wall, inclosing a quadrangle two hundred and forty feet by two hundred, which, to the east, is still sheltered by a strong wall of unhewn stones, eight feet in thickness and eighteen in height. A raised terrace, of twenty feet in width, passes round the northern and eastern sides of this space, and on its south-east corner is yet standing a round pillar of rough stones, of the same height as the wall, and nineteen feet in circumference.

"There appear to have been five other pillars on the east, and four on the northern terrace; and as the view of the plain which lies to the south and west is hence very extensive, I am inclined to believe that the square has always been open in these directions. Adjoining to this, we entered by the eastern side to another quadrangle, entirely surrounded by perfect walls of the same height and thickness as the former one, and measuring one hundred and fifty-four feet by one hundred and thirty-seven. In this were yet standing fourteen very well-constructed pillars, of equal dimensions with that in the adjoining inclosure, and arranged, four in length and three in breadth of the quadrangle, from which on every side they separated a space of twenty-three feet in width: probably the pavement of a portico of which they once supported the roof. In their construction, as well as that of all the walls which we saw, a common clay having straw mixed with it has been used, and is yet visible in those places which are sheltered from the rains. Rich grass was growing in the spacious courts where Aztec monarchs may once have feasted; and our cattle were so delighted with it that we left them to graze while we walked about three hundred yards to the northward, over a very wide parapet, and reached a perfect, square, flat-topped pyramid of large unhewn stones. It was standing unattached to any other buildings, at the foot of the eastern brow of the mountain, which rises abruptly behind it. On the eastern face is a platform of twenty-eight feet in width, faced by a parapet wall of fifteen feet, and from the base of this extends a second platform with a parapet like the former, and one hundred and eighteen feet wide. These form the outer defensive boundary of the mountain, which from its figure has materially favoured their construction. There is every reason to believe that this eastern face must have been of great importance. A slightly raised and paved causeway of about twenty-five feet descends across the valley, in the direction of the rising sun; and being continued on the opposite side of a stream which flows through it, can be traced up the mountains at two miles' distance, until it terminates at the base of an immense stone edifice, which probably may also have been a pyramid. Although a stream (Rio del Partido) runs meandering through the plain from the northward, about midway between the two elevated buildings, I can scarcely imagine that the causeway should have been formed for the purpose of bringing water to the city, which is far more easy of access in many other directions much nearer to the river, but must have been constructed for important purposes between the two places in question; and it is not improbable, that it once formed the street between the frail huts of the poorer inhabitants. The base of the large pyramid measured fifty feet, and I ascertained, by ascending with a line, that its height was precisely the same. Its flat top was covered with earth and a little vegetation; and our guide asserted, although he knew not whence he received the information, that it was once surmounted by a statue. Off the south-east corner of this building, and at about fifteen yards distant, is to be seen the edge of a circle of stones about eight feet in diameter, inclosing, as far as we could judge on scraping away the soil, a bowl-shaped pit, in which the action of fire was plainly observable; and the earth, from which we picked some pieces of pottery, was evidently darkened by an admixture of soot or ashes. At the distance of one hundred yards south-west of the large pyramid, is a small one, twelve feet square, and much injured. This is situated on somewhat higher ground, in the steep part of the ascent to the mountain's brow. On its eastern face, which is toward the declivity, the height is eighteen feet; and apparently there have been steps by which to descend to a quadrangular space, having a broad terrace round it, and extending east one hundred feet by a width of fifty. In the centre of this inclosure is another bowl-shaped pit, somewhat wider than the first. Hence we began our ascent to the upper works, over a well-buttressed yet ruined wall, built, to a certain extent, so as to derive advantage from the natural abruptness of the rock. Its height on the steepest side is twenty-one feet, and the width on the summit, which is level, with an extensive platform, is the same. This is a double wall, one of ten feet having been first constructed and then covered with a very smooth kind of cement, after which the second has been built against it. The platform (which faces to the south, and may to a certain extent be considered as a ledge from the cliff,) is eighty-nine feet by seventy-two; and on its northern centre stand the ruins of a square building, having within it an open space of ten feet by eight, and of the same depth. In the middle of the quadrangle is to be seen a mound of stones eight feet high. A little farther on, we entered by a broad opening between two perfect and massive walls, to a square of one hundred and fifty feet. This space was surrounded on the south, east, and west, by an elevated terrace of three feet by twelve in breadth, having in the centre of each side steps, by which to descend to the square. Each terrace was backed by a wall of twenty feet by eight or nine. From the south are two broad entrances, and on the east is one of thirty feet, communicating with a perfect inclosed square of two hundred feet, while on the west is one small opening, leading to an artificial cave or dungeon, of which I shall presently speak.

"To the north, the square is bounded by the steep mountain, and in the centre of that side stands a pyramid with several ledges, or stages, which in many places are quite perfect. It is flat-topped, has four sides, and measures at the base thirty-eight by thirty-five feet, while in height it is nineteen. Immediately behind this, and on all that portion of the hill which presents itself to the square, are numerous tiers of seats, either broken in the rock or built of rough stones. In the centre of the square, and due south of the pyramid, is a small quadrangular building, seven feet by five in height. The summit is imperfect, but it has unquestionably been an altar; and from the whole character of the space in which it stands, the peculiar form of the pyramid, the surrounding terrace, and the seats or steps on the mountain, there can be little doubt that this has been the grand Hall of Sacrifice or Assembly, or perhaps both.

PASSING to the westward, we next saw some narrow inclosed places, apparently portions of an aqueduct leading from some tanks on the summit of the mountain; and then were shown the mouth of the cave, or subterraneous passage, of which so many superstitious stories are yet told and believed. One of the principal objects of our expedition had been to enter this mysterious place, which none of the natives had ever ventured to do, and we came provided with torches for the purpose. Unfortunately, however, the mouth had very recently fallen in, and we could merely see that it was a narrow, well-built entrance, bearing, in many places, the remains of good smooth plastering. A large beam of cedar once supported the roof, but its removal by the country people had caused the dilapidation which we now observed. Mr. Tindal, in knocking out some pieces of regularly burnt brick, soon brought a ruin upon his head, but escaped without injury; and his accident caused a thick cloud of yellow dust to fall, which on issuing from the cave assumed a bright appearance under the full glare of the sun;—an effect not lost upon the natives, who became more than ever persuaded that an immense treasure lay hidden in this mysterious place. The general opinion of those who remember the excavation is, that it was very deep; and, from many circumstances, there is a probability of its having been a place of confinement for victims. Its vicinity to the great hall, in which there can be little doubt that the sanguinary rites of the Mexicans were once held, is one argument in favour of this supposition; but there is another equally forcible—its immediate proximity to a cliff of about one hundred and fifty feet, down which the bodies of victims may have been precipitated, as was the custom at the inhuman sacrifices of the Aztecs.* A road or causeway, to be noticed in another place, terminates at the foot of this precipice, exactly beneath the cave and overhanging rock; and conjecture can form no other idea of its intended utility, unless as being in some manner connected with the purposes of the dungeon.

"Hence we ascend to a variety of buildings, all constructed with the same regard to strength, and inclosing spaces on far too large a scale for the abode of common people. On the extreme ridge of the mountain were several tolerably perfect tanks.

"In a subsequent visit to this extraordinary place, I saw some other buildings, which had at first escaped my notice. These were situated on the summit of a rock terminating the ridge, at about half a mile to the N. N. W. of the citadel.

"The first is a building originally eighteen feet square, but having the addition of sloping walls to give it a pyramidal form. It is flat-topped, and on the centre of the southern face there have been steps by which to ascend to the summit. The second is a square altar, its height and base being each about sixteen feet. These buildings are surrounded at no great distance by a strong wall; and at a quarter of a mile to the northward, advantage is taken of a precipice to construct another wall of twelve feet in width upon its brink. On a small flat space between this and the pyramid, are the remains of an open square edifice, to the southward of which are two long mounds of stone, each extending about thirty feet; and to the north-east is another ruin, having large steps up its side. I should conceive the highest wall of the citadel to be three hundred feet above the plain, and the bare rock surmounts it by about thirty feet more.

"The whole place in fact, from its isolated situation, the disposition of its defensive walls, and the favourable figure of the rock, must have been impregnable to Indians; and even European troops would have found great difficulty in ascending to those works, which I have ventured to name the Citadel. There is no doubt that the greater mass of the nation which once dwelt here, must have been established upon the plain beneath, since from the summit of the rock we could distinctly trace three straight and very extensive causeways, diverging from that over which we first passed. The most remarkable of these runs south-west for two miles, is forty-six feet in width, and, crossing the grand causeway, is continued to the foot of the cliff, immediately beneath the cave which I have described. Its more distant extreme is terminated by a high and long artificial mound, immediately beyond the river, toward the hacienda of La Quemada. We could trace the second south and south-west, to a small rancho named Coyote, about four miles distant; and the third ran south-west by south, still farther, ceasing, as the country people informed us, at a mountain six miles distant. All these roads had been slightly raised, were paved with rough stones, still visible in many places above the grass, and perfectly straight.

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* The writings of Clavigero, Solis, Bernal Diaz, and others, describe this mode of disposing of the bodies of those whose hearts had been torn out and offered to the idol.

"From the flatness of the fine plain over which they extended, I cannot conceive them to have been constructed as paths, since the people, who walked barefoot and used no animals of burden, must naturally have preferred the smooth, earthy footways, which presented themselves on every side, to these roughly paved ones. If this be allowed, it is not difficult to suppose that they were the centre of streets or huts, which, being in those times constructed of the same kind of frail materials as those of the present day, must long since have disappeared. Many places on the plain are thickly strewed with stones, which may once have formed building materials for the town; and there are extensive modern walls round the cattle farms, which, not improbably, were constructed from the nearest streets. At all events, whatever end these causeways may have answered, the citadel itself still remains, and from its size and strength confirms the accounts given by Cortez, Bernal Diaz, and others of the conquerors, of the magnitude and extent of the Mexican edifices, but which have been doubted by Robertson, De Pau, and others. We observed also, in some sheltered places, the remains of good plaster, confirming the accounts above alluded to; and there can be little doubt that the present rough, yet magnificent buildings, were once encased in wood and whitened, as ancient Mexico, the towns of Yucatan, Tobasco, and many other places are described to have been.

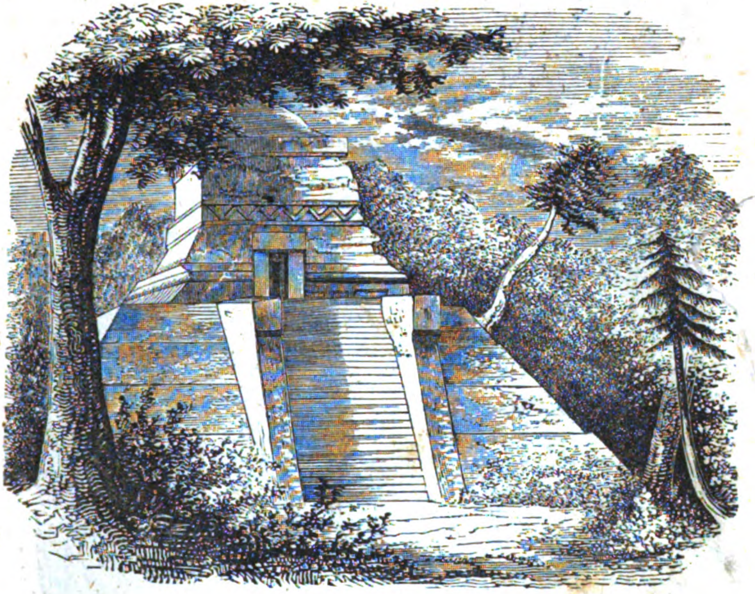
"The Cerro de los Edificios, and the mountains of the surrounding range, are all of gray porphyry, easily fractured into slabs, and this, with comparatively little labour, has furnished building-materials for the edifices which crown its summit. We saw no remnants of obsidian among the ruins or on the plain—which is remarkable, as being the general substance of which the knives and arrow-heads of the Mexicans were formed; but a few pieces of a very compact porphyry were lying about, and some appeared to have been chipped to a rude form resembling arrow-heads.

"Not a trace of the ancient name of this interesting place, or that of the nation which inhabited it, is now to be found among the people in the neighbourhood, who merely distinguished the isolated rock and buildings by one common name, 'Los Edificios.' I had inquired of the best instructed people about these ruins; but all my researches were unavailing, until I fortunately met with a note in the Abbe Clavigero's 'History of Mexico,' which throws some light on the subject. 'The situation of Chicomoztoc, where the Mexicans sojourned nine years, is not known; but it appears to be that place, twenty miles distant from Zacatecas, toward the south, where there are still some remains of an immense edifice, which, according to the tradition of the Zacatecanos, the ancient inhabitants of that country, was the work of the Aztecs on their migration; and it certainly cannot be ascribed to any other people, the Zacatecanos themselves being so barbarous as neither to live in houses nor to know how to build them.' "

"Fifteen leagues west from Papantla," says Mr. Mayer, "lie the remains of Tusapan, supposed to have been a city of the Totonacos. They are situated in the lap of a small plain at the foot of the Cordillera, and are relics of a town of but limited extent. Of all these, however, nothing remains in great distinctness but the pyramidal monument, or Teocalli, of which the following drawing is given by Nebel.

"This edifice has a base line of thirty feet on every side, and is built of irregular stones. A single stairway leads to the upper part of the first story, on which is erected a quadrangular house or tower; while in front of the door still stands the pedestal of the idol, though all traces of the figure itself are gone. The interior of this apartment is twelve feet square, and the roof terminates in a point like the exterior. The walls have evidently been painted, but the outlines of the figures are no longer distinguishable.

"The door and the two friezes are formed of sculptured stones; but it is evident from the fragments of carving, and a variety of figures of men and animals that lie in heaps about the rest of the city, that this temple was, in point of adornment, by no means the most splendid edifice of Tusapan."



Temple at Tusapan.

"The village of Papantla," says Mr. Mayer, "lies sixteen leagues from the sea, and fifty-two north from Vera Cruz, at the base of the eastern mountains, in the midst of fertile savannahs constantly watered by streams from neighbouring hills. Although it is the centre of a country remarkable for fertility,* the Indian village has scarcely a *white* inhabitant, with the exception of the curate, and some few dealers, who come from the coast to traffic their wares for the products of the soil. The people of the upper country dislike to venture into the heat and disease of the *tierra caliente;* and, in turn, its inhabitants dislike an exposure to the chills of the *tierras frias* or *templadas*. Thus the region of Papantla, two leagues from the village, has hitherto remained an unexplored nook, even at the short distance of fifty miles from the coast; and although it was alluded to by Baron Humboldt, it had never been correctly drawn, or even accurately described before the visit of M. Nebel. The neighbouring Indians, even, had scarcely seen it, and considerable local knowledge was required to trace a path to the relic through the wild and tangled forest.

There is no doubt, from the masses of ruins spread over the plain, that this city was more than a mile and a half in circuit. Although

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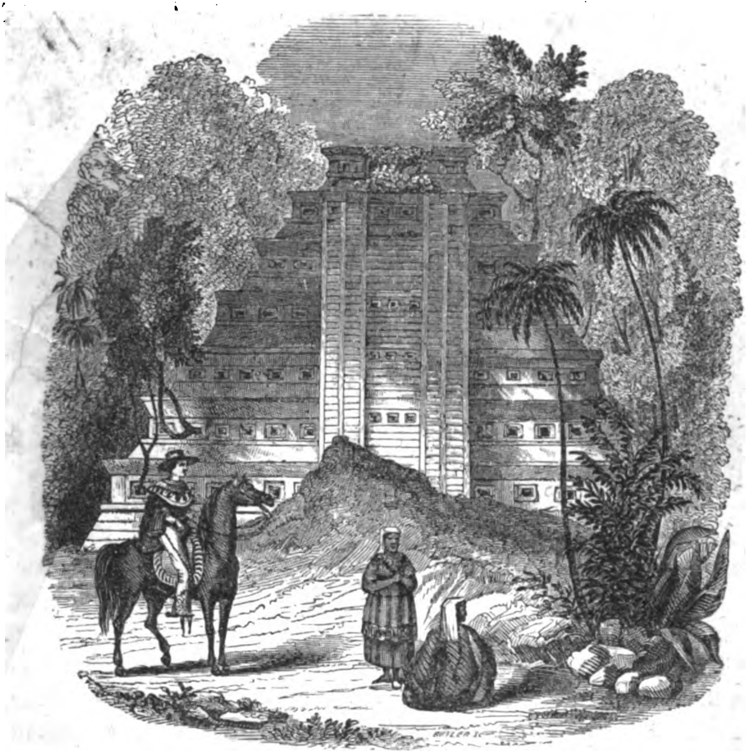
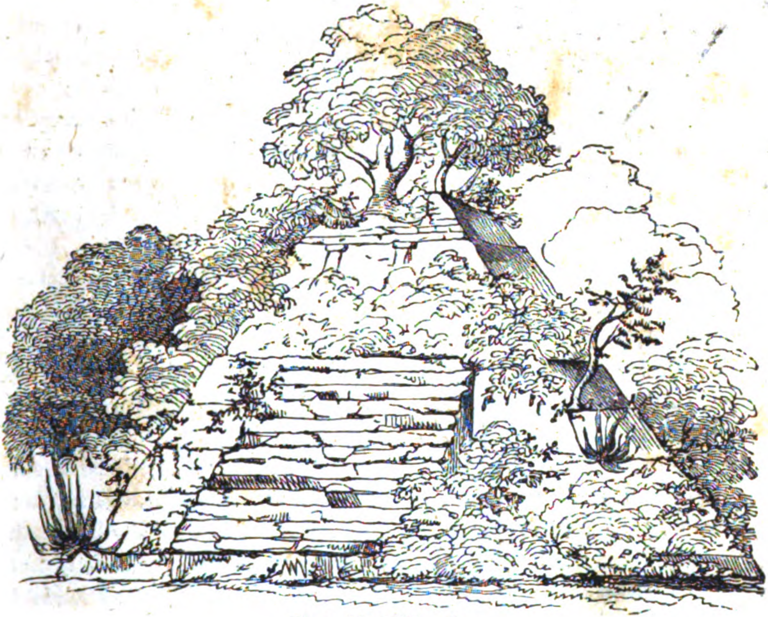
* The productions here are vanilla, sarsaparilla, pepper, wax, cotton, coffee, tobacco, a variety of valuable woods, and sugar, produced annually from canes, which it is necessary to plant only every seven or eight years.



Pyramid of Papantla.

there seems good reason to believe that it was abandoned by its builders after the conquest, there has still been time enough both for the growth of the forest in so warm and prolific a climate, and for the gradual destruction of the buildings by the seasons and other causes. Indeed, huge trees, trailing plants, and parasite vines have struck their roots among the crannies and joints of the remaining pyramid, and, in a few years more, will consign even that remnant to the common fate of the rest of the city.

"The above plate presents a view of the pyramid, (called by the natives, "El Tajin,") as seen by Nebel after he had cleared it of trees and foliage. It consists of seven stories, each following the same angle of inclination, and each terminated, as at Xochicalco, by a frieze and cornice. The whole of these bodies are constructed of sand-stone, neatly squared and joined, and covered, to the depth of three inches, with a strong cement, which appears, from the remains of colour in many places, to have been entirely painted. The pyramid measures precisely one hundred and twenty feet on every side,



Pyramid of Misantla.

and is ascended, in front, by a stairway of fifty-seven steps,* divided in three places by small box-like recesses or niches, two feet in depth, similar to those which are seen perforating the frieze of each of the bodies. This stairway terminates at the top of the sixth story, the seventh appearing (although in ruins) to have been unlike the rest, and hollow. Here, most probably, was the shrine of the divinity and the place of sacrifice."†

With the following account of Misantla, we close our extracts from the entertaining and instructive work of Mr. Mayer.

"Passing by the Island of Sacrificios, I will now describe the ruins that were discovered as recently as 1835, adjacent to Misantla, near the city of Jalapa, and not very far from the direct road to the capital.

"The work from which I extract my information is the Mosaico Mexicano, to which it was contributed, I believe, by Don Isidrio Gondra.

"On a lofty ridge of mountains in the canton of Misantla, there is a hill called Estillero, (distant some thirty miles from Jalapa,) near which lies a mountain covered with a narrow strip of table-land, perfectly isolated from the surrounding country by steep rocks and inaccessible barrancas. Beyond these dells and precipices there is a lofty wall of hills, from the summit of one of which the sea is distinctly visible in the direction of Nautla. The only parts of the country by which this plain is accessible, are the slopes of Estillero: on all other sides the solitary mountain seems to have been separated from the neighbouring land by some violent earthquake that sunk the earth to an unfathomed depth.

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* Nebel does not give the elevation, but says there are fifty-seven steps to the top of the sixth story, each step measuring one foot in height.

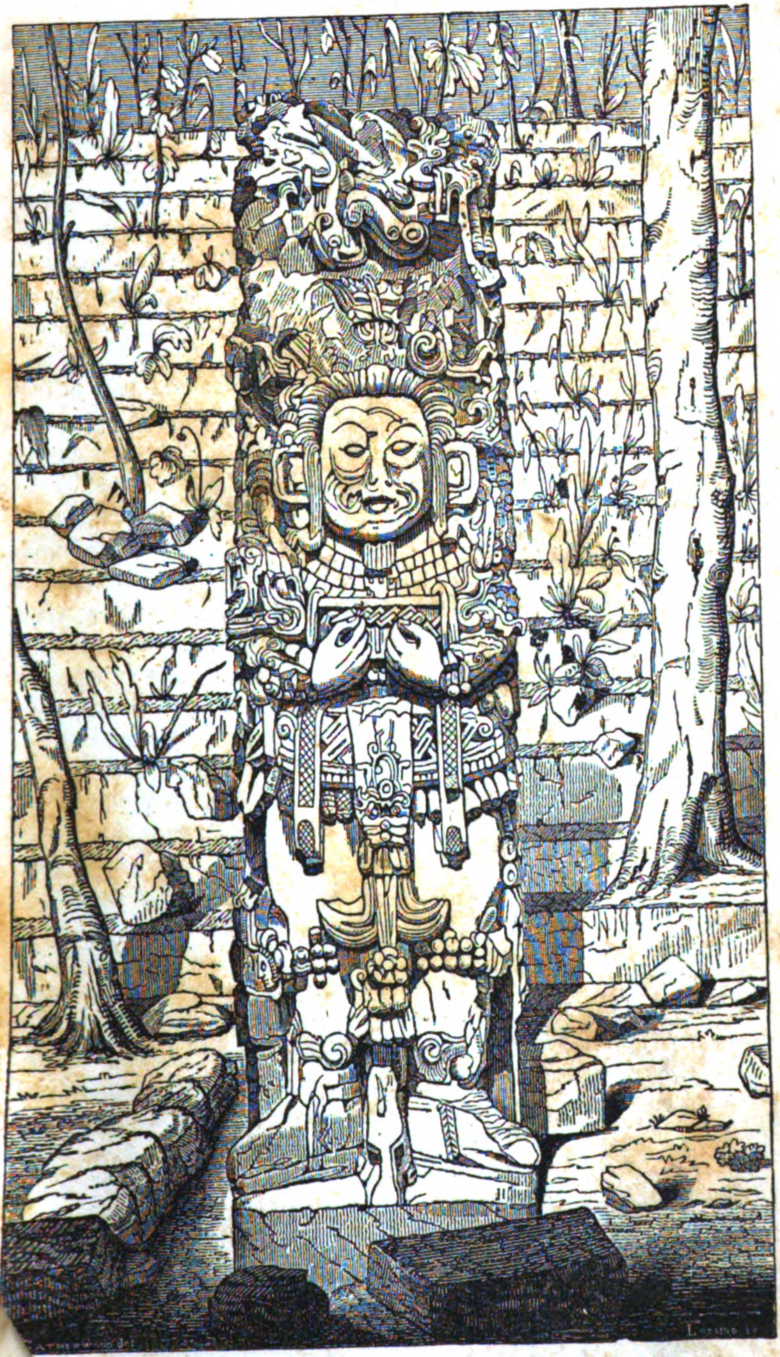
† Vide Humboldt, vol. ii. 345,—and Nebel.

"On this recluded and isolated eminence, are situated the remains of an ancient city. As you approach the plain by the slopes of Estillero, a broken wall of large stones, united by a weak cement, is first observable. This apears to have served for protection to a circular plaza, in the centre of which is a pyramid eighty feet high, forty-nine feet front, and forty-two in depth.

"The account does not state positively whether this edifice is constructed of stone, but it is reasonable to suppose that it is so, from the wall found around the plaza, and the remains which will be subsequently mentioned. It is divided into three stories, or rather, there are three still remaining. On the broadest front a stairway leads to the second body, which, in turn, is ascended at the side, while the top of the third is reached by steps cut in the corner edge of the pyramid. In front of the *teocalli*, on the second story, are two pilastral columns, which may have formed part of a staircase; but this portion of the pyramid, and especially the last body, is so overgrown with trees that its outline is considerably injured. On the very top, (driving its roots into the spot that was doubtless formerly the holy place of the temple,) there is a gigantic tree, which from its immense size in this comparatively high and temperate region, denotes a long period since the abandonment of the altar where it grows.

"At the periphery of the circular plaza around this pyramid, commence the remains of a town, extending northerly in a straight line for near a league. Immense square blocks of stone buildings, separated by streets at the distance of about three hundred yards from each other, mark the sites of the ancient habitations, fronting upon four parallel highways. In some of the houses the walls are still three or four feet high, but of most of them there is nothing but an outline tracery of the mere foundations. On the south, there are the remains of a long and narrow wall, which defended the city in that quarter.

"North of the town there is a tongue of land, occupied in the centre by a mound, or cemetery. On the left slope of the hill by which the ruins are reached, there are, also, twelve circular sepulchres, two yards and a half in diameter, and as many high; the walls are all


Catherwood del.
Lossing sc.

Monument at Copan.

were found beads, a flint poniard, and ornaments of bone resembling polished ivory. Now, although such things have not been discovered at Palenque, still, as it is probable that the same nation inhabited all the cities of that region of the American continent, the relics at Durango may very fairly be referred to, in the inquiry under consideration. Let it be remembered, also, that the Mexicans have a tradition of some universal deluge, resembling that of Noah; and they relate a circumstance that occurred on the subsidence of the waters, precisely similar to the scriptural account of the dove and the olive branch. The ancient Mexican calendar also, was not unlike, in several of its features, to the calendars of Egypt and of Asia.

"The various reasons which have here been assigned, all tending to show the probability of a kindred taste, and kindred manners and worship, between the long buried people of Central America and the ancient inhabitants of some parts of Asia, and perhaps of Egypt, seem naturally to point to the conclusion, that this continent was originally settled by emigrants from the East. The Phœnicians, and the Carthaginians who sprang from them, were both celebrated for their extensive commerce, and also for the secrecy they observed in not allowing neighbouring nations to know the more distant places to which they traded. Is it not possible—nay, is it not probable—that one or both of these mercantile nations visited America? And if they did, the origin of these ruins, and their resemblance to the old structures of the east, are at once accounted for. When the Carthaginian fleet was destroyed by the Romans, all the ships were burnt, except some which were absent from Carthage. Perhaps it is not too wild a conjecture to be hazarded, that the vessels which were not in port might have been at some Carthaginian colony in America. All this, however, with other and similar speculations, must be considered doubtful, as no strong light has yet been thrown upon the subject, to guide us back through the dimness of antiquity. A vast and wonderful field lies open to the traveller, the historian, the philosopher, and, indeed, to every explorer into the past. The entire question of the origin and characteristics of the people of Palenque and other neighbouring cities, seems pregnant with instruction and interest, as developing a most important feature, and probably a very eventful period in the annals of the human race."

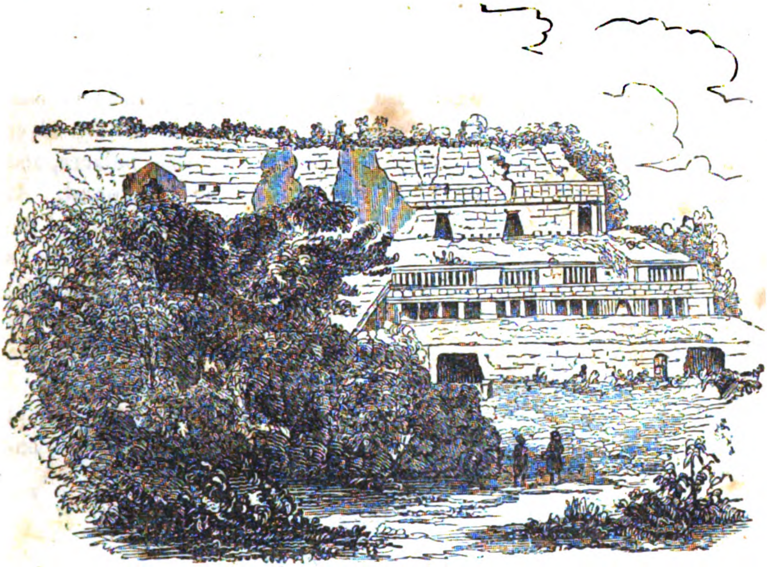
In 1842, B. M. Norman, Esq., of New Orleans, published his "Rambles in Yucatan," by which the public were again astonished and delighted with a new disclosure of wonderful ruins at Chi-Chen, Kahbah, Zayi, and Uxmal. The stupendous ruins described by Mr Norman are evidently the work of the same race who built the temples and pyramids of Palenque and Copan. They were scattered over the northern part of the Isthmus of Yucatan, between twenty and twenty-one degrees of north latitude, at Uxmal, Meridah, Zayi, Chi-Chen, and Kahbah, and were for the most part, previously unexplored. Mr. Norman thus describes the ruins of Zayi:

"The ruins of Zayi are situated in the midst of a succession of beautiful hills, forming around them, on every side, an enchanting landscape.

"The principal one is composed of a single structure, an immense pile, facing the south, and standing upon a slight natural elevation. The first foundation is now so broken that its original form cannot be fully determined; but it probably was that of a parallelogram. Its front wall shows the remains of rooms and ceilings, with occasional pillars, which, no doubt, supported the corridors. The height of this wall is about twenty feet, and, as near as I was able to measure around its base, (owing to the accumulation of ruins,) it was ascertained to be two hundred and sixty-eight feet long, and one hundred and sixteen wide.

"In the centre of this foundation stands the main building, the western half only remaining, with a portion of the steps, outside, leading to the top. This part shows a succession of corridors, occupying the whole front, each supported by two pillars, with plain square caps and plinths, and intervening spaces, filled with rows of small ornamented pillars. In the rear of these corridors are rooms of small dimensions and angular ceilings, without any light except that which the front affords. Over these corridors, or pillars, is a fine moulding finish, its angle ornamented with a hook similar to those of Chi-Chen. Above this moulding is a finish of small plain round pillars, or standards, interspersed with squares of fine ornamental carvings; the central façade showing the remains of more elaborate work, concentrated within a border, the arrangement of which is lost. There is an evident analogy existing between these ornaments and those of Kahbah, but order is less apparent. I could discover no resemblance whatever to those of Chi-Chen.

"Over these rooms of the main building is another terrace, or foundation, in the centre of which is a building in similar ruins to those under it; having, also, broken steps leading to the top. It stands upon a foundation, apparently, of six to eight feet in height, occupying about two-thirds of the area; the residue, probably, forming a promenade. There are three doorways yet remaining, the lintels and sides of which are broken, and which have caused the walls above to fall down. The walls of this part of the edifice are constructed of hewn stone, without any signs of ornament. A plain finished moulding runs through the centre; portions of the cornice



Ruins of Zayi.

still remain, with three or four pieces of flat projecting stones, which formed a part of the top finish.

"The whole extent of the rear is covered with confused piles of ruins, overgrown with trees. Near by these are fragments of walls and rooms, with a few ornaments yet remaining about them. Some of the rooms appear to have been single, and apart from all other buildings. There are also various mounds in the vicinity.

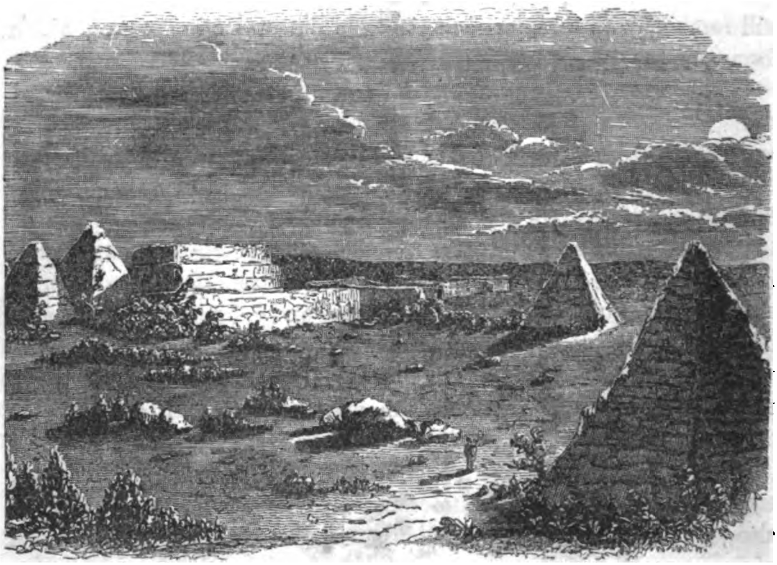
"A few rods south are the remains of a single high wall, with numerous square apertures, like pigeon-holes. Its foundation is elevated; around which the broken walls and ceilings are to be seen. The summits of the neighbouring hills are capped with gray broken walls for many miles around. I discovered no hieroglyphics or paintings of any kind; neither the extraordinary skill displayed in the ornamental carvings, as at Chi-Chen.

"On my route to these ruins I made digressions from the road, and found, on all sides, numerous remains of walls and ceilings; also, mounds and small pyramids, covered with the wild vegetation of the country. My time being limited to a day, I left these interesting reminiscences of an unknown people under the cover of night, and returned, wearied with my day's labour, to Nohcacab."

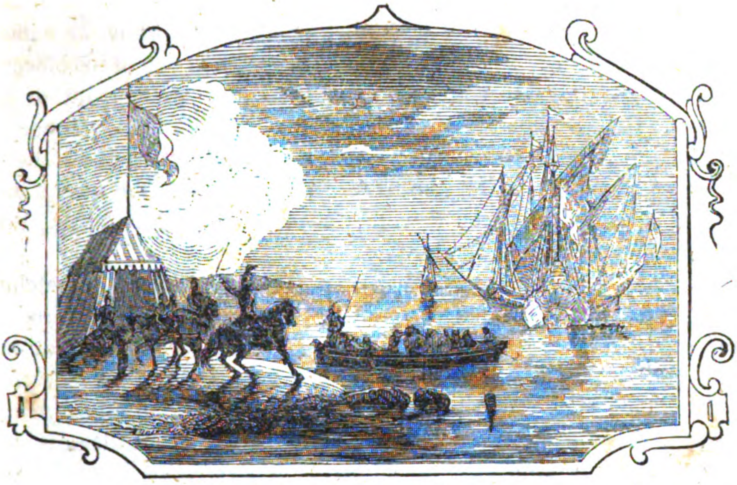
Our limits will not permit us to follow Mr. Norman in his minute description of the ruins of the other cities in this remote district of the Mexican republic, but we cannot take leave of him without quoting the following remarks on a moonlight view of the ruins of Uxmal.

"A moonlight scene from the Governor's House is one of the most enchanting sights I ever witnessed. The moon had risen about half way up from the horizon, and was now throwing its strong silver light over the whitened façade of *our house*. Castles, palaces, and falling pyramids were distinctly to be traced in the foreground. At a distance, walls and mounds, rising above the green verdure of the land, looked like a multitude of small islands in a calm summer's sea. All was quiet but the chirp of the cricket, or the occasional scream of some night-bird of the wood. It was a scene of natural beauty such as I never have seen realized upon the canvass of the artist, or even in the pages of poetry."

We will linger no longer among the interesting ruins of the ancient empires of Mexico, but proceed at once to our account of the conquest by Cortes.



Ruins of Uxmal.



The landing of Cortes at Vera Cruz.

CHAPTER V.

HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST BY CORTES.

THE island of Cuba was conquered in 1511, by the Spaniards under Velasquez, who immediately turned his attention to the seas westward of his island, in the hope of verifying the prediction of Columbus, that sailing to the westward would result in still further discoveries. One of the expeditions prepared by him, and commanded by a wealthy colonist, named Cordova, discovered the peninsula of Yucatan, and the country which was shortly to be the scene of the wonderful exploits of Cortes. This success caused great exultation in the breast of Velasquez, although its commander, Cordova, lost his life by a wound received in battle with the natives, who slew a large portion of his followers. Juan de Grijalva, the nephew of the governor, left Cuba in April, 1517, and spent five months in cruising along the coast, trading with the natives for gold trinkets. He landed at a small island, where the Spaniards first saw a human sacrifice, whence they gave it the name of the Island of Sacrificios. He also touched at another small island, which he named San Juan de Ulloa. From this place he despatched one of his officers, Pedro de Alvarado, to Cuba, to give Velasquez an account of his success. Grijalva continued his voyage as far as Panuco, whence he judged it advisable to return to Cuba. He had explored a hitherto unknown coast of several hundred miles in extent, the wealth and fertility of which rendered it worthy of the name of New Spain, thus early conferred upon it.

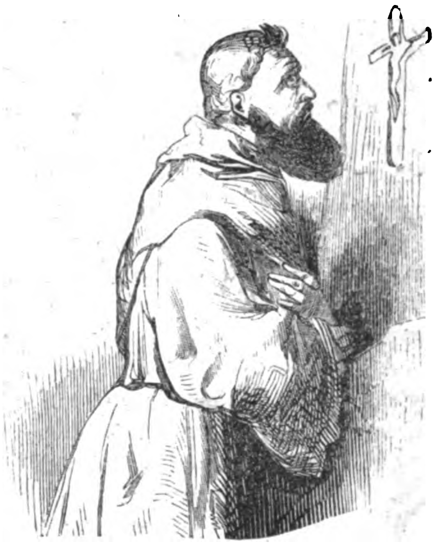
Alvarado's information so transported Velasquez, that he despatched a messenger to the king of Spain, with an account of his efforts for the extension of the empire, and their glorious results, and at the same time began to prepare a powerful armament for the conquest of these new lands, the command of which he determined to give to a man possessed of the requisite ability and resolution to lead it successfully, and at the same time so gentle and tractable in spirit as to be a passive instrument in his own hands. He was too jealous of Grijalva to intrust him with the charge, and he could find no one who united in himself the incongruous qualities he was seeking. At length Andreas Duero, his own secretary, and Amador de Lares, the royal treasurer of Cuba, proposed to him the name of Cortes, who had given many proofs of his capacity for the command, whose popularity was exceedingly great, whose fortune would materially assist in fitting out the expedition, and whose gratitude it was supposed, would secure his fidelity to Velasquez. The governor was persuaded, sent for Cortes, and appointed him captain-general of the expedition.

Cortes received his commission with every demonstration of respect and gratitude, and immediately erected his standard before his own door, assumed a military dress somewhat befitting his rank, and exerted his utmost influence and activity in persuading his friends to engage in the service, and in urging forward the preparations for the voyage. All his own funds, and all the money he could raise by mortgaging his lands and Indians, were expended in the purchase of military stores and provisions, and it was afterwards contended that two-thirds of the expenses of the expedition were borne by him. The change in the manners and habits of Cortes, which came suddenly over him, was noticed by the governor with some distrust, which his disappointed competitors were quick to perceive, and malicious enough to turn to his disadvange. Their insinuations had such an effect upon the mind of the governor that he determined to depose

Cortes from the command, but that officer had already noticed the altered feelings of the governor toward him, and by the advice of Lares and Duero, determined to outwit his patron. He accordingly hastened forward his preparations, shipped all the stores that had been collected, brought all his officers on board, and set sail on the night of the 18th of November, 1518, taking leave of the governor on the following morning, by a wave of his hand, as he stood in his boat, out of reach of that worthy functionary. From St. Jago he sailed to Trinidad, on the same side of the island, with a view to add to his stock of military stores and provisions, which he had not had time to complete. He afterwards sailed to the Havana, for the same purpose. At each of these places he was joined by additional recruits. Many cavaliers of distinction, some of whom had accompanied Grijalva, entered his ranks at Trinidad.

OF these are named Pedro de Alvarado, Christoval de Olid, Alonzo de Avila, Juan Velasquez de Leon, Alonzo Hernandez de Puertocerro, and Gonzalo de Sandoval. The conduct of Cortes in departing so suddenly filled the mind of Velasquez with still more serious apprehensions, and he wrote to the governors of both the places at which he stopped, to seize the captain-general and send him back. The governors, however, were both well disposed towards Cortes, and even if they had been otherwise they were powerless to effect the governor's purposes so devoted had his followers already become to him.

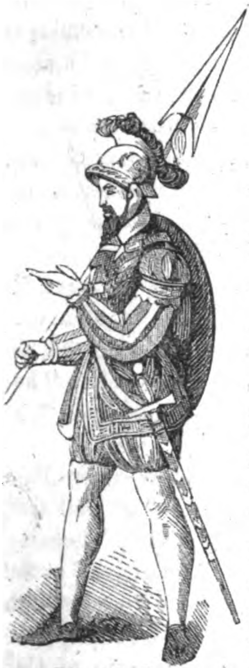
The expedition finally left the island of Cuba on the 18th of February, 1519. It consisted of eleven vessels, mostly small, and without decks, all of which in a few days reached the island of Cozumel in safety, where Cortes landed to review his troops. He had five hundred and fifty-three soldiers, and one hundred and ten marines, under his command, with sixteen horses, ten brass field-pieces, four smaller ones, called falconets, and thirty-two cross-bows; the most of the soldiers were armed with the ordinary steel weapons. They had some two hundred Cuba Indians, and last, but in the estimation of the adventurers, not least in importance, two ecclesiastics, the licentiate, Juan Diaz and father Bartholomew de Olmedo. The inhabitants of Cozumel were very friendly, and Cortes remained there nine or ten days, endeavouring, by the aid of an interpreter, to argue the natives into a belief in Christianity. One of his most potent arguments was the tumbling of their idols down the stairs of the great temple. An altar was constructed where they had stood, and an image of the Virgin and child was placed over it. The natives were horror struck,



Bartholomew de Olmedo.

but as their gods did not resent the indignity, they were persuaded to be Christians. At Cozumel, Cortes discovered Jeronimo de Aguilar, a man who had been educated for the church, but who having been wrecked in 1511, on his passage from Darien to Hispaniola, had been seven years in slavery. He spoke the language of the natives of Yucatan, and was very useful as an interpreter.

On the 4th of March, 1519, the fleet set sail from Cozumel, and on the 13th entered the Grijalva, or Tabasco river, up which he sailed as far as the town of the same name, remarking every where on his passage the preparations of the natives to give him battle. On reaching Tabasco, he fought his way through great bodies of the Indians, who darkened the air with the flight of their arrows and stones, to the open square in the centre of the city. The discharge of firearms terrified the enemy, who retired from the conflict, leaving Cortes to take possession of the country in the name of the king of Spain, which he did by giving a large tree three slashes with his sword, while they went to prepare for a great battle. Suspecting their intentions, Cortes, on the following morning, sent out detachments under Alvarado, and Francisco de Luva, to reconnoiter, which were in great danger of being destroyed by the enemy. They brought back on their retreat a few prisoners, however, from whom it was ascertained that the whole country was in arms, prepared to assault him on the following day. He brought the horses and heavy guns from the ships, and determined to anticipate the attack. The com mand of his artiliery he gave to Misa, an engineer who had served in Italy.

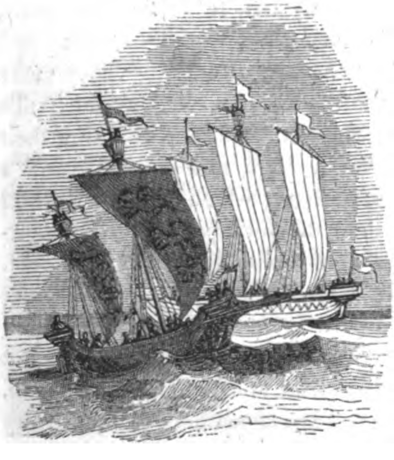


Diego de Ordaz.

DIEGO DE ORDAZ was placed at the head of the infantry, and he himself led the cavalry, which included several of the bravest of his band. The cavalry were to make a circuit and fall on the rear of the enemy, who were encamped in a plain without the city, while the infantry and artillery attacked them in front. The artillery made sad havoc among the dense ranks of the poor natives, who returned the fire by discharging their arrows and stones, while they tried to hide their loss by throwing up dust and leaves. Their numbers were so immense that the little army seemed in danger of being overwhelmed. The engagement had lasted nearly an hour, and they scarcely had room left to work their guns, when the cavalry came to the rescue, and threw the Indians into disorder. They came on through the thick ranks, cleaving the skulls of the enemy right and left, and shouting their war-cry of "San Jago and San Pedro," a circumstance, perhaps, which led the faithful to imagine that in the moment of their deliverance they saw the patron saint of Spain doing battle for them valiantly on his war-horse. Some think it was the tutelar divinity of Cortes, Saint Peter, but the honest historian, Bernal Diaz, a participant and chronicler of the actions of the conquerors, says that being too great a sinner, he was not permitted to see either one or the other of the apostles on this occasion.

The Indians, panic-stricken at the sudden appearance of the cavalry in their rear, and imagining the horse and his rider to be one, were immediately thrown into confusion, and when Ordaz made a general charge along their line, they fled without resistance. Cortes made no pursuit, but drew up his men under a copse of palms to return thanks to God for a victory which had cost them but two killed and a hundred wounded, while the enemy had fallen by thousands.

The spirit of the Tabascans was subdued. The chiefs came to the camp of the victor with faces expressive of deep contrition, and brought him presents of fowls, fish, maize, and numerous gold toys representing animals in miniature. For the horses they brought a feast of turkeys and roses. They gave Cortes twenty Indian girls, slaves, to attend the army. They uttered the words "Culua, Mexico," and pointed to the west in reply to questions where the gold came from, and as the soldiers had received "no particular satisfaction" at finding no gold in the town, they were anxious to proceed on the voyage. The eloquence of Father Olmedo having induced the chiefs to embrace Christianity, Cortes celebrated their conversion by a magnificent procession on Palm Sunday, in which thousands of Indians participated, to the principal temple. The image of the presiding deity was deposed, and that of the Virgin with the infant Saviour substituted; the holy father celebrated mass, and the wondering natives, according to the chronicles, were affected to tears. "This must needs be a great God," they said, "to whom such valiant men show such respect." "They hit upon the truth," says De Solis, "but mistook in their way of reasoning." Cortes then took leave of the cacique and the principal Indians, well satisfied that the efficacy of his teachings, if they had not converted them, "had brought them so far in the way to salvation, as to desire, or at least not to oppose the means of obtaining it."*



ON the Monday after Palm Sunday, the flotilla set sail from Tabasco, and on Holy Thursday, April 20, 1519, it arrived at San Juan de Ulloa. Here a light pirogue pushed off from the shore, and steered for the ship of Cortes, which they entered not only without fear, but with the air of ease and confidence which marks good breeding. Their language, unfortunately, Aguilar could not understand, but they were released from this dilemma by Donna Marina, one of the twenty slave girls given to Cortes by the Tabascans. She was a Mexican by birth, and in her captivity she had learned the Tabascan language, so that, by means of a double interpretation, the Spaniards were able to communicate with the natives. She was a girl of great talent, and she soon relieved Aguilar of part of his duty as interpreter, by learning the Spanish language herself. Cortes made her his interpreter, then his secretary, and finally his mistress. She was universally beloved by the army, and her name, Malinche, was always pronounced with tenderness by the conquered races, who were not long in learning that they met with sympathy in her noble, generous heart.

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* De Solis's History of the Conquest, vol. i. Book I.

By means of his interpreter, Cortes learned that the Aztec visiters to his ship were ordered by the governor of the province to ascertain what he wanted on their coasts, and to promise to supply whatever he required. He told them that he wished to make the acquaintance of the people of that country, and that he would do them no injury. He gave them some cut-glass beads, and an entertainment, after which they took their leave, promising that Teuhtlile, the governor of the province under Montezuma, would pay him a visit shortly. On the next day, Friday, April 21st, Cortes landed his troops, his horses, and the artillery, selected a camp, and began to fortify it, the Indians assisting him very much in the labour.

TEUHTLILE and his attendants had an interview with him the next day, in which he treated them with much ceremony, but immediately preferred a request which gave them great uneasiness. This was, to be conducted without loss of time into the presence of their master. Teuhtlile informed him that a statement of his demand should be sent to the emperor, and that an answer would be returned in a few days. He received some presents from Cortes for the emperor, and gave him some for his king in the name of that prince. Observing one of the governor's attendants engaged in drawing, Cortes looked upon his labour, and was astonished to see a representation on canvass of the Spaniards, their arms, costume, and objects of interest connected with them. The picture writing of the country was explained to him, and gave him much pleasure. He ordered the army to go through its exercises, the cavalry to be exercised on the beach, and the artillery to be fired into the woods, where the balls made great havoc among the thick foliage; and drew the attention of the artist to the ships. All these excited much terror in the mind of Teuhtlile and his followers, but a clear account of the whole was painted out and despatched to the emperor.

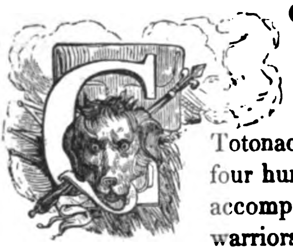
Montezuma now commenced a course of conduct marked by timidity and irresolution, which would be altogether unaccountable in so brave and mighty a sovereign, did we not recollect the Aztec proneness to superstition, and the story of Quetzalcoatl, whose prediction (that strangers with white skins like his own, would come from the East in the future, to conquer and possess the country,) was constantly present to his mind. There could be no question that he looked upon the Spaniards, from the hour of their first visit, under Grijalva, as the men who were to bring about this fatal revolution; and the accounts of the dreadful lesson of their might taught to the Tabascans, had been transmitted to him, and added to his disquieting apprehensions. He refused to allow the strangers to visit him, but endeavoured to forestall hostile feelings on their parts by so magnificent a present as should prove his friendship and secure their gratitude. It was composed of finely wrought cotton stuffs, and many splendid specimens of the feather-work of the country, with a miscellaneous collection of jewels, and articles of gold and silver, among which were two plates, "as large as carriage wheels;" one of gold, representing the sun, worth more than two hundred thousand dollars, and another of silver, typical of the moon. The Spaniards were delighted with the present, but Cortes did not so well like the message which accompanied it, that Montezuma was happy to hear of the existence of his royal brother of Spain, and wished to be considered his friend, yet he could not come to see the Spaniards, and it was too far for them to come and see him. He therefore hoped they would depart, and carry his respects to his brother, their monarch.

The Spanish general coolly answered that he could not leave the country without being able to say that he had seen the king with his own eyes; and the ambassadors departed, carrying a poor present from Cortes. Montezuma at first resolved to sacrifice the strangers to his gods, but his fears immediately overcame his resolution, and he sent them a second magnificent present, with the message that he could not permit any thing more to be said as to the interview. Cortes thanked the ambassadors for their present, and returned a more decided message to Montezuma, to the same effect as before. The Mexicans evinced surprise and disgust at his conduct, and withdrew from all intercourse with him.

CORTES now determined to throw off all connexion with Velasquez, whose partisans in the expedition gave him an opportunity, by clamouring for the return of the expedition to Cuba. The captain-general pretended to yield to their commands, and ordered the embarkation of the army, when his own party flocked to his tent, and implored him not to abandon an enterprise so successfully begun. He therefore revoked the forme order, and forthwith commenced the establishment of a new city which was called Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz, "The Rich Town o the True Cross." Alcaldes and other officers were appointed, and the whole city government fixed, although the first stone of it was as yet to be laid. Cortes then appeared before the council and resigned his authority. Whereupon the council unanimously appointed him, in the king's name, captain-general and chief justice of the colony. Thus he substituted the king of Spain for the governor of Cuba as the source of his authority. While these ceremonies were being enacted, a deputation arrived from Cempoalla, the capital city of the Totonacs, whose cacique invited Cortes to visit the city. The possibility of dividing the empire against itself instantly suggested itself to Cortes, who marched to Cempoalla while the city of Villa Rica was slowly erected. The Spaniards gained the good will of the Totonacs; although they put an end to their human sacrifices by destroying their gods before their eyes. The cacique also gave Cortes, by his daily conversation, a great insight into the condition of the empire, which, groaning under the heavy taxes caused by the lavish expenditure of Montezuma, with its nobles disgusted by his arrogance, only waited an opportunity for assailing the Aztecs with success.

Cortes, being ready to march into the interior, returned first to Villa Rica, where a Spanish vessel had arrived in his absence, with a reinforcement of twelve volunteers and two horses. These joined his standard, and informed him that Velasquez had received the royal authority to found a colony in New Spain. Cortes then determined to send his two friends, Puertocerro and Montejo, to Spain, with two letters, one written by himself, the other by the authorities of Villa Rica; nearly all of the gold that had been collected; and the presents of Montezuma, a richer freight than had ever yet left the shores of the New World. The chief business of the voyage, however, was to secure the appointment of Cortes as captain-general of the colony. The pilot was ordered to make at once for Spain, and by all means to avoid touching at Cuba.

The departure of Puertocerro and Montejo filled the minds of many of his followers with longings for their homes, and Cortes soon after discovered a conspiracy, formed by some soldiers and sailors, to seize a vessel and return to Cuba. The licentiate, Diaz, was implicated in the plot, and would have been put to death had he not been a priest. As it was, two of the ringleaders were executed, and the pilot had his feet cut off. This determined Cortes to destroy his ships, and finding his most trusty followers similarly disposed, he obtained a report from the pilots that the vessels were no longer seaworthy, and then caused them to be stripped of their apparel, broken in pieces, and sunk. This bold measure added one hundred and ten sailors to his force, many of whom became valiant soldiers, and all of whom were of great use.



CORTES left a considerable force as a garrison at Villa Rica, under his trustworthy friend, Juan de Escalante, and set out on his march inland from the country of the Totonacs, August 16, 1519. His army numbered four hundred Spaniards on foot, and fifteen horses, accompanied by thirteen hundred Cempoallan warriors and a thousand *tamanes*, or Indian body slaves, who were employed in laborious offices. Leaving the Tierra Caliente, they began the ascent of the mountains which separate it from the plain of Anahuac, and in a few days they reached the province of Tlascala, the only nation of Anahuac which the fierce Aztecs had not been able to bring under their yoke. From their known enmity to Montezuma and his race, the Cempoallans had confidently counted upon a favourable reception and alliance with them, but in this they were sorely disappointed. The supreme power in Tlascala was exercised by four caciques, who held their courts in different quarters of the same city, independent of each other, yet united in the strictest alliance. Around them were gathered the nobles and people. On the approach of the Spaniards, a consultation was had respecting the treatment to be given them, and the council was divided, for a time, between two opinions. Some were disposed to welcome them in the hope of overthrowing the empire of Montezuma by their aid; others justly answered that the Spaniards were the common enemies of both races, and that they ought to be destroyed immediately. Hostilities were at length resolved upon, and the young chief Xicotencatl, the son of one of the four caciques, led the armies of his country to battle. The annals of warfare record not the name of a more determined leader; and the world never produced a braver army. The first battle was fought on the first two days of September, 1519, and the Spaniards triumphed, but with the utmost difficulty. "Every man among us did his duty," says Bernal Diaz, "and we fought away like brave warriors, for in all truth we were placed in greater jeopardy this time than we had ever been before." Cortes sent them an offer of peace next morning, to which the young general, Xicotencatl, answered that they would make peace after they had satiated themselves with the flesh of the Spaniards, and honoured the gods with the sacrifice of their blood and hearts.

Xicotencatl, on the fifth of September, fought a second battle with the Spaniards, equally severe with the first, and on the night of the succeeding day, a third attack was made. There was not one of the Spaniards who had not by this time received one or more wounds.

Some of their number, and one of their horses had been slain. But the muskets and artillery of the Spaniards had been dreadfully destructive, and the rulers of the Tlascalans felt disposed to accept the peace which Cortes had so constantly offered.

They came to this resolution at a fortunate time for Cortes, whose soldiers were exceedingly mutinous, charging him with causing their destruction by his rash course in regard to the ships, and demanding to be led back to Vera Cruz. Cortes and Father Olmedo were themselves suffering with fever, yet neither the chief nor his men durst lay aside their arms for a moment. The most zealous of the followers of the conqueror could not refrain from thinking "what would be the final issue of this campaign, and if they once got out of the present snare, where they were next to bend their steps; for the idea of penetrating to Mexico appeared to them perfectly absurd, when they considered the great power of that state. If even they succeeded in making the same good terms with the people of Tlascala as they had done with the Cempoallans, what would become of them if they ever came to an engagement with the great armies of Montezuma."* Cortes replied to their statements, that what had been done had been done for the best, and that retreat in their present circumstances would be certain death. On a renewal of their remonstrances, he put an end to the cabals by the heroic answer, that in any event, it was better to die like a brave warrior, than to live a coward

A TREATY with the Tlascalans was readily concluded, and on the 23d of September they entered their chief city, a large and populous town, compared by Cortes to Grenada, in Spain. The Tlascalans bound themselves to be vassals of the king of Spain, and to assist Cortes in his expedition, while he engaged to defend their persons and property, and took their state under his protection. While the negotiations were pending, a communication was received from Montezuma himself, who entreated Cortes to put no faith in the Tlascalans, who were treacherous barbarians, and invited him in cordial terms to visit his capital, pointing out the road through the city of Cholula as the most convenient. Cortes made many efforts to gain the good will of the Tlascalan chiefs, and succeeded to a great extent, a result to be attributed to the prudence of Father Olmedo, who persuaded him in their case to leave them their idols and superstition, only prohibiting human sacrifices. As soon

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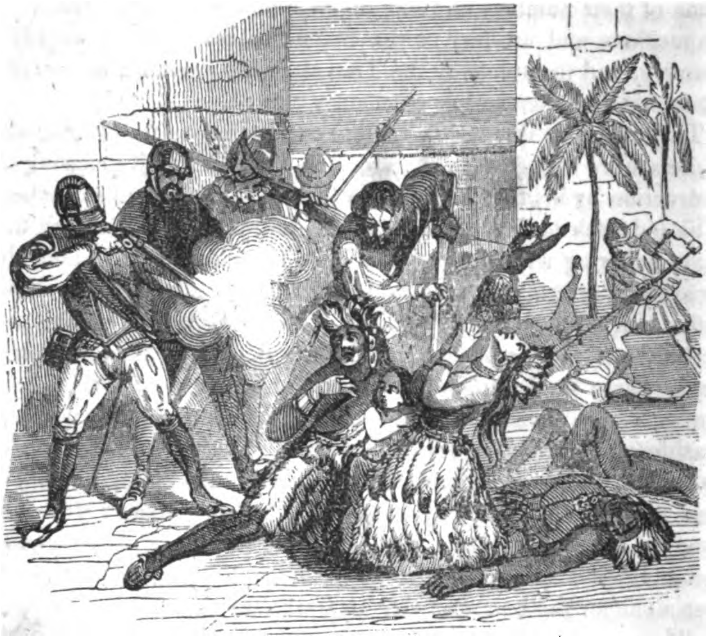
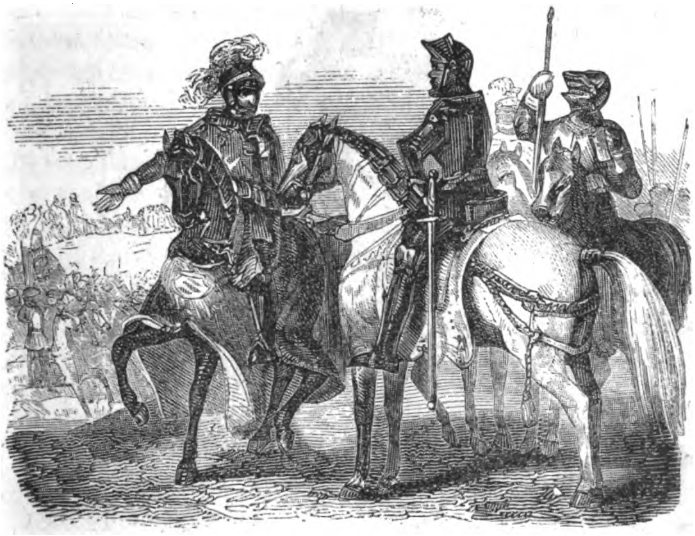
* Bernal Diaz, chapter 66.



Massacre at Cholula.

as his men had rested somewhat from their fatigue, he set out for Mexico, accompanied by six thousand Tlascalan warriors, who earnestly dissuaded him from the attempt, but proved the sincerity of their advice by their subsequent devotion. Their approach gave Montezuma great alarm, and he set on foot a scheme for massacring them in the city of Cholula. Tlascalan vigilance discovered the plan, however, and Cortes took a terrible vengeance on the holy city. By a stratagem of his own, he seized on the persons of the magistrates and chief citizens, and then ordered the whole of his followers, Spaniards, Tlascalans, and Cempoallans to fall upon the disorganized people. The massacre lasted two days. A number of the priests and leading citizens shut themselves up in their temples. The torch was brought, and the buildings, the garrisons, and the gods perished together. At length Cortes released and forgave the magistrates, telling them of their intended treachery, requiring them to recall the fugitive people, and establish order in the town.

From Cholula he advanced directly towards the capital of Montezuma, who behaved at this juncture in a most unworthy manner. He sent ambassadors to Cortes with overtures of reconciliation, promising him an immense quantity of gold if he would advance no further. Cortes, of course, refused, and continued a march, which, toilsome



Cortes advancing to the City of Mexico.

and bitterly cold, was amply rewarded by the sight, which burst suddenly upon them, of the valley of Mexico. We quote the eloquent account of Mr. Prescott. "Turning an angle of the sierra, they came suddenly upon a view which more than compensated their toils. It was that of the valley of Mexico, which with its picturesque assemblage of water, woodland, and cultivated plains, its shining cities and shadowy hills, was spread out like some gay and gorgeous panorama before them. Stretching far away at their feet were seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar; and beyond yellow fields of maize, and the towering maguey, intermingled with orchards and blooming gardens. In the centre of the great basin were beheld the lakes, their borders thickly studded with towns and hamlets; and in the midst, like some Indian empress with her coronal of pearls, the fair city of Mexico, with her white towers and pyramidal temples, reposing, as it were, on the bosom of the waters—the far famed 'Venice of the Aztecs.'"*

From this time, all that they saw in their journey until their entry into Mexico, seemed to the Spaniards like fairy land. Montezuma had suffered the strangers to advance almost to the gates of the capital before he had determined whether to receive them as friends or enemies. At length, however, he sent his nephew, Cacama, with a train of nobles to escort him to the city. Following his direction,

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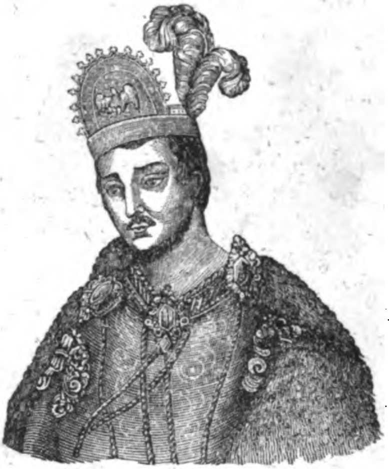
* Conquest of Mexico, vol. ii. 47.



Montczuma.

the Spaniards marched along the margin of the Lake Xochichalco to the royal city of Iztapalapan, where they spent the night in most excellent quarters. On the morning of the 8th of November, 1519, they marched along the causeway towards the capital. They trembled when they saw that the causeways were intersected at intervals by drawbridges through which canoes passed and repassed, for they saw that their retreat could at any time be cut off by this means, and they had had abundant evidence of the emperor's dislike for them, and of the hollowness of his present professions of friendship. Cortes marched first with his small body of horse; next came the Spanish foot, about four hundred in number, after them the Indian *tamenes* carrying the baggage, and last of all the Tlascalan warriors, in number about five thousand. The inhabitants crowded from the city to look at them as they came along the causeway, and as they came near to the city they were met by the emperor himself, accompanied by an immense train of nobles, who demeaned themselves in his presence as though he were a deity. At length Cortes and the emperor stood face to face. The Spanish chieftain accosted him in the fashion of Europe, with the most profound reverence. Montezuma returned the salutation by touching the earth with his hand and kissing it, the customary expression of reverence from inferiors to those who are above them in rank, and which when used by the emperor to the Spaniards, elevated the latter in the minds of the wondering Aztecs to a position only inferior to that occupied by their gods.

After the exchange of presents, Montezuma and his attendants withdrew, the Spaniards following them into the city, where they were conducted to their quarters, situated in an immense square in the centre of the city, adjoining the temple of the great Mexican war god. Montezuma was waiting to receive them, and he supplied their wants with his characteristic profusion. Next day Cortes visited him in his palace, attended by some of his principal officers, and in the course of the conversation which ensued, expounded to him some of the tenets of his religion, at which the emperor seemed displeased, but replied courteously. The intercourse was maintained day after day, and the soldiers and citizens began to grow familiar with each other. The emperor escorted Cortes through the city, showing to him the market-place, the public buildings, and the temple. At the request of Cortes, though with great reluctance, Montezuma led them into the very sanctuary or tower where the gods were: "Here," says Bernal Diaz, "were two altars, highly adorned with richly wrought timbers on the roof, and over the altars gigantic figures resembling very fat men. The one on the right was their war god, with a great face and terrible eyes. This figure was entirely covered with gold and jewels, and his body bound with golden serpents; in his right hand he held a bow, and in his left a bundle of arrows. Before the idol was a pan of incense, with three hearts of human victims, which were burning, mixed with copal. The whole of that apartment, both walls and floor, was stained with human blood in such quantity as to cause a very offensive smell. On the left was the other great figure, with a countenance like a bear, and great shining eyes of the polished substance whereof their mirrors are made. The body of this idol was also covered with jewels. An offering lay before him of five human hearts. In this place was a drum of most enormous size, the head of which was made of the skins of large serpents. This instrument, when struck, resounded with a noise that could be heard at the distance of two leagues, and so doleful that it deserved to be named the music of the infernal regions."

The first of the deities here described was Huitzilopochtli, the war god. Of the other, Tezcatlipoca, who was only inferior to the invisible supreme god, and who created the world, Diaz makes this singular statement: "He was the god of hell, and the souls of deceased Mexicans stood under him."

This horrible scene filled the pious mind of Cortes with horror, and he could not refrain from remonstrating with the emperor upon the subject. "I cannot imagine that such a powerful and wise monarch as you are, should not have yourself discovered by this time, that these idols are not divinities, but evil spirits, called devils. In order that you may be convinced of this, and that your papas may satisfy themselves of this truth, allow me to erect a cross on the summit of this temple; and in the chapel where stand your Huitzilopochtli and Tezcatlipoca, give us a small space that I may place there the image of the holy Virgin; then you will see what terror will seize these idols by which you have been so long deluded."

MONTEZUMA knew what the image of the Virgin Mary was; yet he was very much displeased with Cortes's offer, and replied in the presence of two papas, whose anger was not less conspicuous, "Malinche, could I have conjectured that you would have used such reviling language as you have just done, I would certainly not have shown you my gods. In our eyes these are good divinities: they preserve our lives, give us nourishment, water, and good harvests; healthy and growing weather, and victory whenever we pray to them for it. Therefore we offer up our prayers to them, and make them sacrifices. I earnestly beg of you not to say another word to insult the profound veneration in which we hold these gods."

As soon as Cortes heard these words, and perceived the great excitement under which they were pronounced, he said nothing in return, but merely remarked to the monarch with a cheerful smile, "It is time for us both to depart hence." To which Montezuma answered, that "he would not detain him any longer, but he himself was now obliged to stay some time to atone to his gods, by prayer and sacrifice, for having committed *gratlatlacol*, by allowing us to ascend the great temple, and thereby occasioning the affronts which we had offered them. "If that is the case," returned Cortes, "I beg your pardon, great monarch."*

The Spaniards now descended from the temple, and on the following day Cortes ventured to request of the emperor permission to convert one of the halls in their residence into a chapel, that they might celebrate the services of their church there. The forgiving monarch not only granted the request, but sent some of his own artisans to aid them in the work. In making the necessary alterations, the Spaniards had sufficient curiosity to take away the plaster from a recently closed up door, to see what was beyond, and they had thus disclosed to them the place in which the emperor kept the treasures he had inherited from his father, a private hoard, the value of which made those who first looked on it "almost speechless with astonishment." "As at that time I was still a young man," says Diaz, "and had never before beheld such vast treasures, I concluded that the whole of the remaining part of the world put together, could not produce such a vast collection of riches. However, all our officers and soldiers agreed to leave every thing untouched, and that the doorway should be walled up again as before, nor was Montezuma to be informed of our discovery."

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* Bernal Diaz, chapter 92.

A week had passed since the Spaniards had entered the capital; and though they had as yet no reason to complain of the manner in which they had been treated, they felt ill at ease. Their allies, the Tlascalans, were hourly suggesting the disadvantages of their situation, and looking at every movement of the Mexicans with the suspicion of enemies. The supply of food furnished for their tables was not so good as at first, and the least of a hundred circumstances might furnish a cause for their destruction. Besides, Cortes was not in the way to complete the conquest of the kingdom while he lay inactive as the guest of the king; and the latter could not be expected to continue friendly intercourse with him if he supposed that there was no intention on his part of departing. While the conquest was but just begun, the arrival of a successor from Spain, might rob him of the fruit of all his labour and sufferings, and another secure imperishable renown by marching past him on the road he himself had pointed out. This would also be one of the consequences of a retreat. Nor could he withdraw from the capital to Villa Rica, with any hope of safety, from the hands of what he had found to be a merciless and treacherous foe. View it as he might, his situation was full of danger, and prompt and successful action only could save him from ruin. But Cortes was never so much at home as when acting in the most fearful extremity. His active mind contrived a plan for his deliverance as bold as it was desperate. This was to get possession of the person of the emperor, and make the regard of his subjects for his safety, a guarantee for the security of the Spaniards against violence, while they used him as a tool for effecting the final success of their enterprise. Cortes immediately proposed the measure to his officers, of whom the most intelligent and resolute so warmly approved of it, that the timid were brought to give their consent, and it was resolved to carry it into execution on the morrow. The intervening night was spent by the pious Father Olmedo in soliciting the favour of heaven for this great enterprise.

A pretext was readily found to justify the act. Cortes had received intelligence of a battle that had been fought between some of the soldiers of the garrison of Villa Rica, and an army of Mexicans under the governor of a province adjacent to the Spanish settlement, and although Cortes really cared little for this occurrence, it served an admirable purpose in the work he had resolved upon. He proceeded in the morning with five of his officers, and the two interpreters, Donna Marina and Aguilar, to the palace of the emperor, taking care to observe the forms they had hitherto used when desirous of an audience. Others of his soldiers were to come in small parties to the palace prepared for any emergency. Montezuma received them kindly, but when Cortes upbraided him with causing the attack that had been made upon the garrison at Vera Cruz, as well as with the attempt to destroy him and his army at Cholula, and informed him that he had now come to make him a prisoner, he gave free vent to his rage and astonishment. His rage was impotent against the stern resolution of the Spaniard, and as he turned from one to another of the pitiless faces of the warriors, whose fingers ever and anon clutched the hilts of their swords, he was seized with a fit of terror and trembling, and burst into tears. Without resistance, he caused himself to be borne in a litter to the residence of the Spaniards, publishing to his nobles and subjects that he went on a visit to Cortes, voluntarily, and desiring them to remain quiet.

At the demand of Cortes, the governor who had made the attack on Villa Rica, was sent for with three of his principal officers, and they were tried for the offence and sentenced to death. When they found they were to die, they boldly laid the blame of the transaction upon Montezuma, whom Cortes therefore kept in irons while the execution was performed. By a master-stroke of policy the victims were burned alive, and the materials used for their funeral pile and used in excessive quantities, were arrows, javelins, and other weapons drawn by the emperor's permission from the arsenals of the city, where they had been stored to supply means of defence in times of civic tumult and insurrection.

All this had taken place within ten days after the arrival of the Spaniards in the city, and for more than three months the emperor was kept a prisoner in the Spanish quarters. Here he was treated with the greatest show of respect, Cortes never allowing him to suffer the least indignity except from himself. Whenever he approached him he doffed his casque, and one of his soldiers who had treated him unkindly was only saved from death by the earnest entreaty of the captive sovereign himself. The kindly demeanour of Montezuma, his gentleness, and more than all, his excessive liberality, to all those about him, won the hearts of all the soldiers, and made him a general favourite. He made not the slightest attempt to regain his liberty, but aided Cortes in seizing, by strategy, the persons of the king of Tezcuco, and other princes of the realm, who had entered into a conspiracy to free their country and the emperor from the foreign yoke. Cortez punished their "rebellion," by confining them in irons.

THE Spaniards did every thing in their power to render his confinement easy to himself, and were particularly careful that nothing of the ceremonies and etiquette formerly observed by his subjects towards him should be omitted. Outside of his own palace his will was absolute law. He was allowed to go into the temple, escorted by a guard of Spaniards, and officiate as of old at the shrine of his gods, his faith in whose divinity could not be shaken by all the logic of both the pious Christian fathers. He listened with deference, it is true, but the conferences on the subject always ended with his declaration that "the God of the Christians was good, but the gods of his own country were the true gods for him." The Spanish general had caused two vessels to be built of sufficient size to transport his whole army across the lake, and when these were finished, he delighted Montezuma and his suite by taking them on a pleasure excursion to the opposite shore of the lake, where the captive king was allowed to hunt in the royal park, as he had been wont to do in happier days.

At one of their first interviews, Montezuma had offered to Cortes to acknowledge formally the supremacy of the Spanish emperor, and he was now called upon to make such an acknowledgment. He made no objections, but assembling all his nobles, he addressed them in a very affecting speech, desiring them to concur in the surrender of the empire to the Spaniards, who, he said, were the race which the great Quetezalcoatl had predicted would come from the rising sun to possess the land. "You have been faithful vassals of mine," said he, "during the many years that I have sat on the throne of my fathers. I now expect that you will show me this last act of obedience by acknowledging the great king beyond the waters to be your lord, also, and that you will pay him tribute in the same manner as you have hitherto done to me." His nobles were greatly astonished, as well as deeply moved at his address, and the tears which coursed down his cheeks during the interview forced their sympathy and obedience. The emperor and all his nobles then took the oath of allegiance to the Castilian throne, and, though "it was in the regular way of their own business," to quote an old chronicler, "there was not a Spaniard who could look on the spectacle with a dry eye."*

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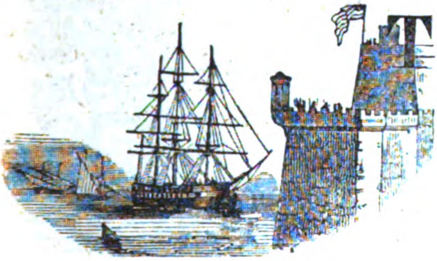
* Prescott, vol. ii. p. 198.

Montezuma accompanied the surrender of his kingdom with the gift of an immense treasure, comprising, besides the hoard which the Spaniards had discovered, a considerable amount collected from the tributaries of his empire. He desired it to be sent to Spain as tribute money to King Charles from his vassal Montezuma. The Spanish soldiers, however, regarded it as part of the fruits of their toils and clamoured for its division. Cortes yielded to their desire, and the treasure which amounted in value to about six millions three hundred thousand dollars, according to Prescott's calculation, was divided after his manner. The king's fifth part was first set aside; a fifth of the remainder was assigned to Cortes; after that the debts of the expedition were to be discharged, including the investments of Velasquez, and the expenses of the embassy to Spain, the losses of the expedition were then to be made good, and finally, certain individuals in the army, as the priests, officers, &c., were to receive larger allowances than the rest. By these drafts, each soldier's share was reduced to about fourteen hundred dollars. Many of the soldiers thought this amount so small, in comparison with their expectations, that they refused to accept it, and others speedily got to the end of their share by gaming with cards made out of the heads of drums. Nearly all, however, complained of injustice in the division, and it required all the ability of Cortes to prevent disastrous consequences.

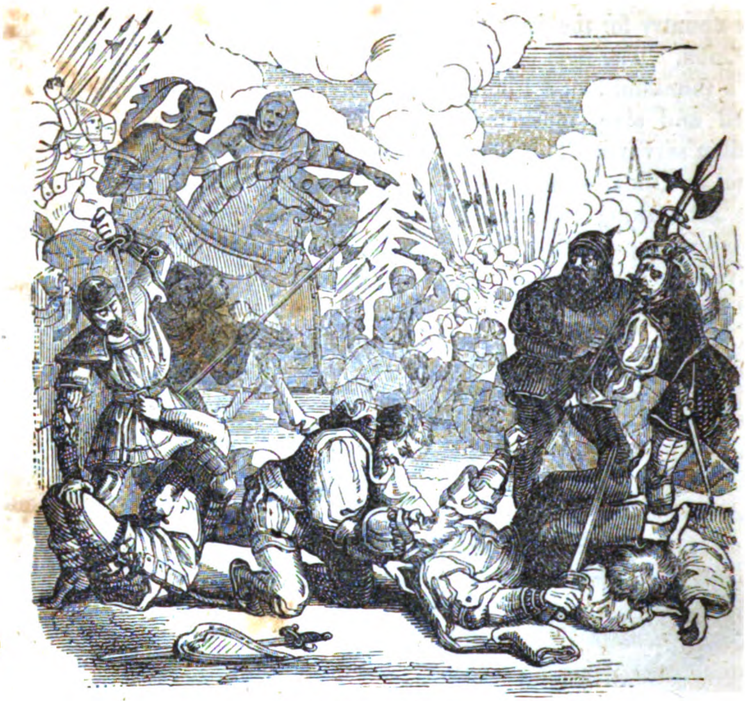
Cortes next demanded of Montezuma that a portion of the great temple of the gods should be given up to him to be converted into a temple for the worship of the true God. Montezuma gave his consent, for he could do no otherwise, and one of the sanctuaries on the top of the temple was purified, and an altar and a crucifix erected in it. The people scarcely needed the instigation of the priests to rouse them to desperation at this proceeding. To have their emperor a prisoner, to give up their kingdom and their treasures, these were galling; but to sit tamely under such an insult to their gods, was too much to ask of them. The priests, with haggard faces, ran through the streets covered with blood, denouncing wo to the people unless the sacrilegious strangers were expelled. Montezuma informed Cortes of this state of feeling, and warned him that he and his men would be made a sacrifice to the offended deities unless they left the country. Already the Spanish quarters were in a state of siege, when, in May, 1520, six months after his arrival in the capital, Cortes received tidings from the coast which gave him greater alarm than even the dangers which surrounded him.

A second expedition had been fitted out by Velasquez, and intrusted to the command of Don Pamfilo de Narvaez, who was to proceed immediately to Mexico, depose or decapitate Cortes, and seize the country for the Spanish sovereign, in the name of the governor of Cuba. The fleet consisted of nineteen vessels, carrying upwards of a thousand foot soldiers, twenty cannons, eighty horsemen, a hundred and sixty musketeers and crossbowmen, besides a thousand Indian servants. This fleet anchored off the coast of Mexico, at San Juan de Ulloa, on the 23d of April, 1520. Here Narvaez received the astonishing information that Cortes was in possession of the Mexican capital, that the emperor was his prisoner, that he had received the surrender of the country and its treasure in the name of the Spanish sovereign, who was not so absolute in Europe as Cortes was in Mexico. Narvaez thereupon announced to the Indians his intention of setting Montezuma free, declaring that he was come to chastise Cortes who was a rebel against his sovereign.



THE city of Villa Rica was first summoned to surrender, but Gonsalvo de Sandoval, the young officer who had been sent by Cortes to watch over that town and his interests after the death of Juan de Escalante, caused the messengers of Narvaez to be seized, strapped them to the backs of Indian porters, and sent them across the country to Cortes, in charge of a couple of soldiers who carried a letter informing the general of what had happened. Cortes, after thoroughly gaining these messengers over to his interests by kind words and presents, sent them back again to sow dissensions in the ranks of his rival.

He also commenced a correspondence with Narvaez, which was continued without any definite result until within a day or two of the settlement of the difference by arms. For Cortes, knowing that on the decision and celerity of his actions depended his only hope of safety, left Pedro de Alvarado in command of a garrison of one hundred and forty men, in Mexico, and marched with the remainder, less than two hundred in number, to the Totonac country, where Sandoval joined him with the little garrison of Villa Rica, and thence to the quarters of Narvaez in Cempoalla. Here a battle was fought on the night of the twenty-sixth of May, 1520, between the heroic little band of the conqueror, and the numerous, well appointed, but half asleep army of Narvaez, who was very quickly defeated, being made prisoner himself, with the loss of one eye. All his troops swore allegiance to Cortes, but when daylight disclosed the numbers and ragged condition of their conquerors, they were nearly mad with

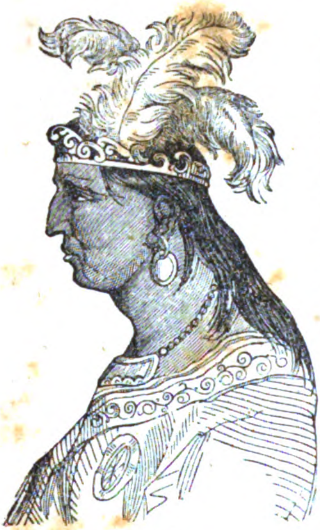


The Defeat of Narvaez.

shame and vexation. However, they were little disposed to hear the terrible war cry of Cortes ring again in their ears, in opposition to themselves, and he soon attached them to himself by his honeyed words, and by gifts so liberally bestowed that his old soldiers began to grow jealous. He had thus increased his own force sixfold; he had thirteen hundred men under his command out of the city of Mexico, one hundred of whom were cavalry, and with such a force, what might he not achieve?

He was roused from his pleasant anticipations by intelligence from Alvarado that the Mexicans had risen *en masse*, and were besieging him and his followers with a prospect of success. This had been brought about by the imprudent policy of Alvarado, who had, under the influence of the fear of a revolt, or in a wanton spirit of cruelty, put to the sword five hundred of the *elite* of the city, as they were celebrating a festival within their great temple. The people had rushed immediately to arms, and were on the point of carrying the palace of the Spaniards by assault, when Montezuma's person was exposed to them, and they abstained from actual battle to besiege the fortress, hoping that famine would soon force a surrender. This was the state of things when Cortes arrived at the city, at the head of his new army, all of whom, says an old historian, had sworn to follow him with a readiness they would have been very far from evincing, had they known what they were to encounter. They reached the great lake on the 24th of June, and marched along the great causeway into the city, without opposition, but amid a silence that was ominous. They reached their stronghold, and the reunion was most joyful. But Cortes was mad with vexation when he learned the cause of the difficulty, and though he sharply rebuked Alvarado for his imprudence, he could effect nothing by punishing him, and he vented his ill humour on the unfortunate Montezuma. The faithful prince felt his unkindness to such a degree that he would hold no intercourse with him, yet he complied, as far as in his power, in trying to check the tumult, and procure provisions for the army.

THEIR efforts were unsuccessful. The day after the arrival of Cortes, a soldier whom he had despatched on an errand, returned to his quarters breathless, and covered with blood from wounds inflicted on him by the Mexicans, who, he said, were all in arms, with the drawbridges broken down, and every preparation made for an assault on the Spaniards in their stronghold. He himself had narrowly escaped being dragged away in a canoe for sacrifice. A struggle now commenced which lasted several days. The desperation with which the Aztecs fought convinced Cortes how much he had hitherto undervalued them, as they openly announced their opinion that they must fight on under defeat until the last Spaniard was slain, satisfied if with a thousand lives they paid for the death of but one of their detested enemies. Day after day the fighting was renewed, the Spaniards being always victorious, but daily losing some of their number. Either they would sally out upon the multitude and cut them down in battle, or else drive them back when they advanced to storm and burn their works. The enemy poured along the streets like a flood, while every terrace in the vicinity was crowded with expert archers and slingers, ready to shower arrows and stones upon any one of the garrison that left his defences for an instant. The soldiers of Narvaez were sadly disappointed in their reception in the city, and began to reproach Cortes with bringing them into destruction, yet their murmurs were changed to shouts of admiration and love when they saw him spur his horse into the thickest of a crowd of Aztecs, to rescue a dying comrade from their hands.

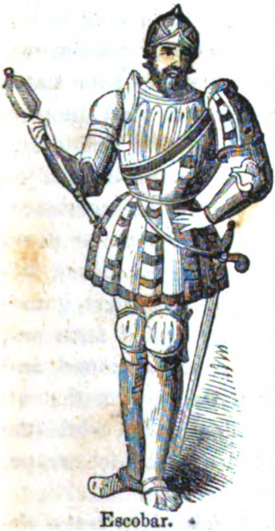


Cuitlahua.

MONTEZUMA'S brother, Cuitlahua, had been arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the rebellion of Cacama. He was released by Cortes soon after his arrival in Mexico, in the hope that he could allay the present tumult, and bring the people to a more friendly state of feeling. But he had never forgiven the injuries he had received from the Spaniards, and he made use of his liberty to take the place of Montezuma during his captivity, and the well-directed movements of the besiegers were owing to his superior ability in organizing the forces. Foiled in this hope, Cortes now turned his thoughts to the emperor himself, and resolved to play off his authority against that of Cuitlahua. He sent to request his interposition with his subjects in behalf of the garrison, but the emperor, whose feelings had been alienated by the treatment he had lately experienced from Cortes, and who felt bitterly the shame of his situation as the ally of his people's enemies, refused compliance. At the further solicitation of Olid and Father Olmedo, and the promise that, if a way were opened for them, the Spaniards would depart, he consented to expostulate with his subjects, more in the hope of sparing their lives than from regard to the Spaniards.

Attired in his royal robes, and attended in state by several of the Aztec nobility, and the Spaniards, he ascended the central turret of the palace, and the tumult and strife hushed at his presence as if by magic. He felt his advantage, and addressed them in a calm voice, announcing himself as the friend of the Spaniards, who, he said, would leave the city if a way were opened for them. He therefore requested them to lay down their arms. A murmur of disgust ran through the multitude at this address; and in the tumult of their passion they entirely forgot their accustomed feelings of respect and veneration; bitter taunts were followed by a hostile demonstration on the part of a chief, and a cloud of stones and arrows descended upon the spot where he stood with his train. The Spaniards attempted to shield his person, but too late; he was wounded by three of the missiles, and fell senseless to the ground. A revulsion of feeling on the part of the mass immediately ensued, and the great square before the palace was entirely deserted.

Montezuma, carried below by his attendants, soon revived from the stunning effects of the blow, which had been inflicted on his head with a stone; but the wretchedness of his condition now overcame him. "He had tasted," says Mr. Prescott, "the last bitterness of degradation. He had been reviled, rejected, by his people. The meanest of the rabble had raised their hands against him. He had nothing more to live for. It was in vain that Cortes and his officers endeavoured to soothe the anguish of his spirit, and fill him with better thoughts. He spoke not a word in answer. His wound, though dangerous, might still, with skilful treatment, not prove mortal. But Montezuma refused all the remedies prescribed for it. He tore off the bandages as often as they were applied, maintaining all the while the most determined silence. He sat with eyes dejected, brooding over his fallen fortunes, over the image of ancient majesty and present humiliation. He had survived his honour. But a spark of his ancient spirit seemed to kindle in his bosom, as it was clear that he did not mean to survive his disgrace."* He expired on the 30th of June, 1520, in the arms of some of his own faithful nobles. "Cortes, his officers, and all of us," says Bernal Diaz, "shed tears for this unfortunate monarch; indeed many of our men who had been in constant attendance upon him, mourned for him as if they had lost a parent. Even Father Olmedo himself, who never for a moment left his side, and who, notwithstanding all his efforts, had not been able to convert him to Christianity, could not refrain from shedding tears. And no one will feel surprised at this who knew what a very kind-hearted person Montezuma was. Mexico never had a better monarch."†


Escobar.

Finding that they suffered severely from the missiles thrown into their fortress from the great teocalli opposite, the Spaniards endeavoured to carry it by storm; but their first efforts, made under the valiant chamberlain of Cortes, Escobar, were unsuccessful. The general himself then fastened a buckler to his disabled left arm, and led on his troops to the attack in person. Terrace after terrace was carried, until finally the opponents met in a hand to hand conflict on the broad level at the top. The natives were doubly numerous, but the victory was on the side of the

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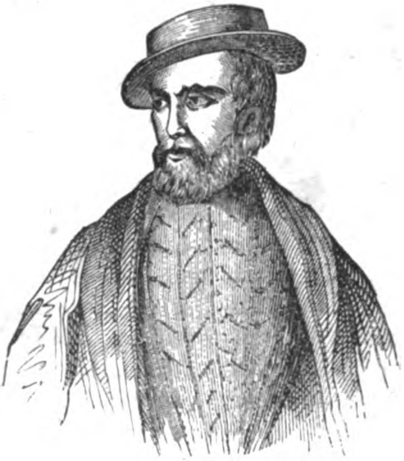
* Conquest of Mexico, vol. ii. p. 320.

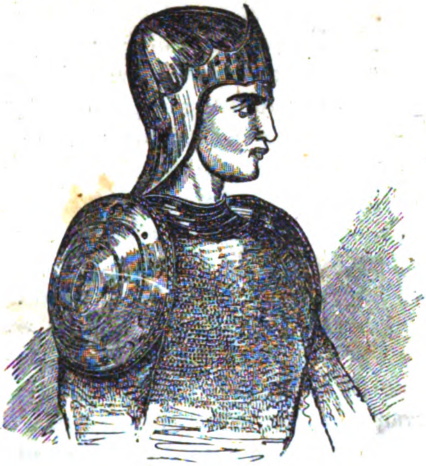
† Chapter 126.



Cortes.

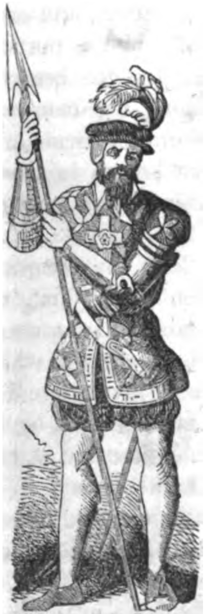
Spaniards. The people ceased fighting to gaze upon the issue above, and the tumbling of the struggling warriors down the sides of the precipice, raised alternate emotions of sorrow or triumph in the spectators. Cortes himself narrowly escaped death in this manner, at the hands of two of the most athletic of the Aztecs, who were dragging him to the edge, joyful in death to rid their beloved land of so terrible a foe. At length, however, the last warrior was overpowered, and the victors rushed into the sanctuaries. They found the statue of the Virgin and the cross removed from their temple; but the grim figure of Huitzilopotchli was still in the other, with the hearts and gore of their own countrymen lying before him. With feelings of joy and triumph, which such devoted missionaries only could experience, they dragged him from his niche and tumbled him headlong down the steps of the teocalli. They then set fire to the sanctuary, descended to the court yard, and marched to their own quarters, unmolested by the terrified natives. In the night they sallied forth and burned three hundred houses. The siege, however, continued, and the enemy continually taunted the Spaniards with the fact that all their losses did not lessen their numbers nor resources, while the Spaniards were becoming continually weaker, and could not escape, *because the bridges were broken down.*

After the death of Montezuma, Cortes determined to leave the city, and night was chosen for the attempt, in the hope that the enemy would then be less alert. The night selected was that of the 1st of July, 1520, still celebrated by the Spaniards as the *Noche Triste*, (sorrowful night.) They began to move, towards midnight, in



Christoval de Olid.

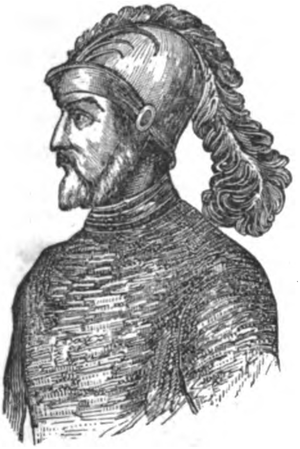
three divisions, Sandoval leading the van, Alvarado and de Leon the rear, and Cortes himself in the centre, where he placed the prisoners, among whom were a son and two daughters of Montezuma, and other Mexicans of distinction, the artillery, the baggage, and a portable bridge, made for the purpose of enabling them to pass the breaches in the causeway. They marched in silence along the causeway which led to Tacuba, because it was most remote from Tlascala, and had been less damaged by the enemy. The first breach in it was reached without molestation, and they were fixing their portable bridge to cross it, congratulating themselves on their success, when the signal was given for the most disastrous battle of the conquest. Instantaneously the lake was covered by canoes, from which the natives poured arrows and stones in upon them from every quarter, rushing forward to do battle on the causeway with a daring in which all thoughts were lost, save those of patriotism and revenge. The wooden bridge unfortunately became so wedged into the mud by the passage of the army over it, that it was impossible to move it, and the army pressed onward to the second breach in dismay. The Mexicans hemmed them in on every side, while their discipline and superior weapons could avail them little on such a narrow field, and amid the darkness of a rainy night. Fresh warriors instantly filled the place of the Mexicans who fell, driven on by those in the rear, until the Spaniards were compelled to give way. The confusion soon became universal, and each one sought only to save himself. Cortes, with a hundred foot soldiers and a few horse, succeeded in forcing his way over the two remaining breaches to the main land, the bodies of the dead serving to fill up the chasms. He formed them on the shore, and returned with Sandoval and a few of the horse, to the place on the causeway, between the second and third breaches, where Alvarado and the rear guard were fighting desperately against the overwhelming numbers of the foe. With his terrible battle cry he reassured the despairing infantry, and led the cavalry to the charge with such furious valour, that the infantry were enabled to reach the other side of the trench. At length all had crossed except Cortes, Sandoval, Alvarado, and a few others. They all made their way over except Alvarado, who had lost his horse, and was bleeding from several wounds. The trench was filled with the enemy, looking at him with fiendish expectation of the moment when he should leap into the ditch and be borne away a sacrifice to the gods, whose servants he had shortly before so ruthlessly destroyed. Five or six were advancing along the causeway to seize him, when he glanced to the other side of the chasm, planted his long lance amid the rubbish in the centre, and clearing it at a bound, placed himself in safety amid his friends. The spot where this tremendous feat was executed, still bears the name of Alvarado's leap.


Velasquez de Leon.

THE Mexicans now retired from the fight, and the Spaniards marched along the causeway to Tlacopan. Here, in the daylight, Cortes was enabled to compute the losses of the night. Four hundred and fifty Spaniards and four thousand of the brave Tlascalans had been slain, drowned, or made prisoners, and this number, with those who had fallen in the terrible conflicts within the city, reduced his army to a little more than one-fourth what it had been. The cannon, fire-arms, and ammunition were all lost, not a musket remaining among the five hundred survivors. The number of the cavalry was reduced to twenty-three, and they were in a most miserable condition. But the loss most severely felt by Cortes was that of his friend, Velasquez de Leon, who, with Alvarado, had held the post of danger, and lost his life defending it. The sight of the wounds of the survivors, the thought of their sufferings, grief at the loss of so many gallant followers and faithful friends, pierced his soul with anguish, and the tears stealing down his cheeks, as he attempted to issue necessary orders, were remarked by his soldiers with affection, as evidence of the goodness of his heart. He wasted no time, however, in vain regrets, but exerted himself to prepare for a future which seemed and proved to be full of danger. The greater part of the treasure was lost. The general had suffered the men to take as much of the gold in the treasury as they wished before setting out, telling them at the same time, however, that those travelled safest who travelled lightest. Very many, however, disdained to follow his advice, and their inconsiderate avarice greatly added to the number of the victims of the night.

At this very moment, however, the spirit of the unconquerable leader was filled with plans for the future, in which no thought save of ultimate success, was allowed to enter. The safety of Donna Marina and Aguilar was a source of great satisfaction to him, but he rejoiced in his heart to find that his skilful shipwright, Martin Lopez, had escaped uninjured. Anticipations of the distant future, however, gave place to the care against immediate danger. The army was on the west side of the lake, and a march was to be made around the north end of it before they could go towards Tlascala, which lay sixty-four miles east of it. They marched for six days through a barren country incessantly annoyed by the enemy, whose attacks required the constant exercise of courage and activity, while want of food was fast reducing their strength. One source of consolation, however, remained to the suffering army; the presence of their leader, foremost in every danger, and sharing with cheerfulness every hardship. He shared with them in a feast off the dead body of a horse, whose decease furnished them with a substitute for the berries and roots on which they had been subsisting.

As they marched along, the enemy, who harassed them repeatedly, uttered the same cry which attracted the attention of the Spaniards. Donna Marina translated it for them, but could not tell its meaning. "Hasten on! you will soon find yourselves where you cannot escape!" Time furnished an explanation. As the army came to the summit of an eminence, they saw in the spacious valley before them, the plain of Otumba, an immense army, extending as far as the eye could reach, and directly in the road they had to follow. This was the main army of the Mexicans, of which the body which had accompanied their retreat, and was now in their rear, was but a small detachment. The boldest of the Spaniards despaired at the prospect of death in the attempt to force a passage at such odds; but Cortes giving them no time for reflection, led on the charge. Every where he made head against them; but all his efforts were unavailing, so far as the end in view was concerned, for one battalion was no sooner dispersed than new ones occupied its place; and as the day wore on, the Spaniards felt their strength failing without seeing any end to their toil, or any hope of victory. The most daring feats of arms had been achieved by the young captain, Sandoval, on whom the admiration of the army was fixed, when the quick eye and daring hand of Cortes himself effected their deliverance. He had noticed at a distance, in the throng, a chieftain whom he judged to be the commander of the enemy from the splendour of his dress, and the standard of the Aztecs, which was a golden net at the end of a short staff, attached to his back between the shoulders. Summoning Sandoval, Olid, Alvarado, and others to his aid, he rushed headlong into the thickest of the enemy, beating them to the earth by the very impetuosity of his attack, and clearing every obstacle in the way to the chief, before the especial object of this onslaught could be discovered. The nobles around the cacique made a gallant resistance; but the fate of this day, and the lives of his whole army, depended now upon his efforts alone, and he overturned them as men of atoms, until he was in the presence of the cacique himself, whom he hurled to the ground with his lance.


Sandoval.

Juan de Salamanca, a brave young cavalier had kept close beside his leader in the charge: he now dismounted and despatched the fallen chief, tearing away his banner, and presenting it to Cortes as the victor. The whole was the work of a moment: the nobles of the guard fled, panic-stricken; every standard among the Aztecs was lowered; weapons were cast aside, and a flight to the mountains commenced. Wounds, hunger, fatigue, every thing was forgotten by the Spaniards and Tlascalans in the eagerness of revenge. The work of slaughter continued until no more victims could be reached, when the conquerors returned to indemnify themselves for the treasures they had lost, in taking the spoils of their enemies. These were exceedingly valuable, as the Mexican army numbered among its slain, many of the principal warriors, who had marched into the battle-field in their richest ornaments, assured of victory. Next day the Spaniards entered the territories of the Tlascalans, whose chiefs soon put to flight their misgivings as to the reception they would meet. "We have made common cause together,"* said Maxixca, "and we have common injuries to avenge; and come weal or come wo, be assured we will prove true and loyal friends, and stand by you to the death."

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* Prescott, vol. ii. p. 407.

THE Totonacs and the Cempoallans remained firm in their attachment to his interests, and thereby secured to him the town of Villa Rica. Their friends at Tlascala were assiduous in their care of the sick and wounded, of whom Cortes himself was one of the greatest sufferers. He lost the use of two fingers of his left hand, and had received two wounds on the head, one of which, exasperated by fatigue and excitement, now threatened his life. A fever ensued, which reduced him to the verge of the grave. His constitution, however, triumphed over the disease, and the quiet inactivity of convalescence enabled him to ponder carefully his plan for continuing to prosecute the conquest.

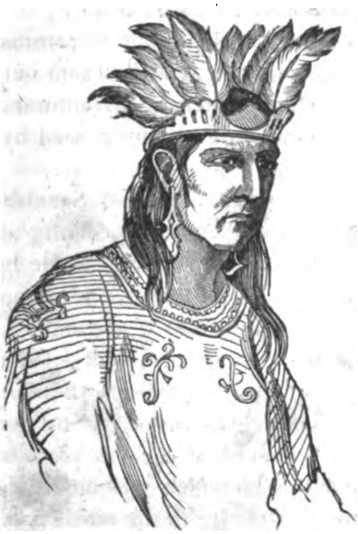
The tidings which reached him were not of a gratifying character. When he came from Mexico to overthrow Narvaez, he had brought with him a quantity of gold, which had been deposited at Tlascala, on his return to Mexico. Velasquez de Leon had added to this a considerable sum: the whole was under the guardianship of a number of invalid soldiers. A party of five horsemen and forty foot, coming from Vera Cruz, offered to escort the invalids and treasure to the capital, and set out on the road thither. The whole party was cut off, and the treasure lost. Twelve other soldiers marching in the same direction, had been massacred in the province of Tepeaca, and accounts were from time to time received of the murder of solitary travellers, who, ignorant of the altered state of affairs at the capital, had ventured to travel thitherward alone.

As soon as he was able to leave his bed, he drew a supply of ammunition and two or three field-pieces from his stores at Vera Cruz, and prepared to take the field for the purpose of punishing some of the neighbouring tribes, who had taken advantage of his clouded fortunes to revolt from his government. Many of the soldiers refused to participate in any further hostilities, demanding to be led back to Vera Cruz; but he made one of his soul-stirring speeches to them, which roused all the enthusiasm of his own first followers, and shamed into silence the discontented soldiers from the army of Narvaez. The Tlascalans gave him a ready support; his former able enemy, the younger Xicotencatl, laying aside the animosity he had heretofore shown towards the Spaniards, and taking the field in person at the head of his countrymen. He could have found no better teacher in the art of war. The Tepeacans, a powerful tribe of the same stock as the Aztecs, had yielded to Cortes when the Tlascalans were subdued, and afterwards resumed their allegiance to the Mexicans. They were defeated in two bloody battles, in which the conquerors gained great booty. For the massacre of the twelve Spaniards they were dreadfully punished. The people of the places implicated in the massacre, were branded with hot iron as slaves, and four-fifths of them distributed among the soldiers and the allies. Cortes now made Tepeaca his head-quarters, and a short but brilliant campaign followed, in which he extended his authority over all the neighbouring provinces, accustomed his men to victory, reasserted the Spanish superiority, taught his Indian allies to act in concert with his own troops, and steadily weakened the Mexican power. Success in battle was followed up by pursuit, and the capture of the enemy's camp, which was given up to plunder; a judicious course which brought about him in immense numbers the brave natives, who fought gladly under a chief always leading them to certain victory and plunder. The character Cortes had acquired for disinterestedness and equity, attached them to his person more and more strongly, as the wisdom of his judgments, when disputed rights and succession to power were referred to his arbitration, led them to yield him an ascendency over their councils greater than had ever before been exercised. Sandoval, at the head of a separate command, destroyed a great force of the enemy, in two battles, fought in the country between Vera Cruz and the camp, and restored the communication with that place, and Cortes soon found himself the head of an empire raised by himself in the heart of the land, rivalling in strength that of the Mexicans themselves.

The captain-general now sent his shipwright, Martin Lopez, to Tlascala to commence the building of thirteen brigantines, which might be taken to pieces and carried on the shoulders of the Indians, to be reconstructed and launched on Lake Tezcuco. The sails, rigging, and other furniture were to be brought from Vera Cruz, from the stored up remains of the dismantled ships. At this juncture, Duero, the secretary, who had hitherto been his fast friend, with some others, left his standard, and sailed away from Vera Cruz by his permission, some of them to meet him again as enemies at the court of Madrid. Their place was supplied by reinforcements which he little anticipated. Velasquez having heard nothing from his expedition under Narvaez, and supposing Cortes, to be by this time, a prisoner in his hands, had despatched a ship with stores, arms, and ammunition to the colony of Villa Rica. The alcalde of Vera Cruz permitted the crew to land, then seized them, secured their vessel, informed them of their error, and induced them to enlist under Cortes. A second vessel sent by Velasquez soon afterwards shared the same fate; three vessels sent by the governor of Jamaica to prosecute discoveries and plant colonies in Central America, met with disasters, and came to Vera Cruz to restore the men, weakened by wounds and sickness, where the crews were easily induced by the magic power of Cortes's name, to abandon their present disastrous service and join his army; and finally, a merchant vessel, sent out from the Canaries to sell arms and military stores to adventurers in the New World, came direct to Vera Cruz, and was purchased by Cortes, crew, vessel, and cargo.

CORTES now founded a second Spanish colony in the interior of the country at Tepeaca, which he called Segura de la Frontera. This place became of some importance in the age of the conquest, but has since steadily declined. With joy at these great accessions to their power, was mingled deep regret on the part of the Spaniards at the loss of their kind friend, the Tlascalan cacique, Maxixca, who fell a victim to the small pox, which had been introduced into the country by a negro in Narvaez's service, and was now sweeping over the whole country, strewing its path with thousands of victims. The emperor, Cuitlahua, the successor of Montezuma, fell beneath it. The good Father Olmedo came to Maxixca on his death bed, and found a crucifix before his couch as the object of his adoration. He was baptized immediately, and the Christians had the satisfaction of believing him at least to be exempted from eternal perdition.

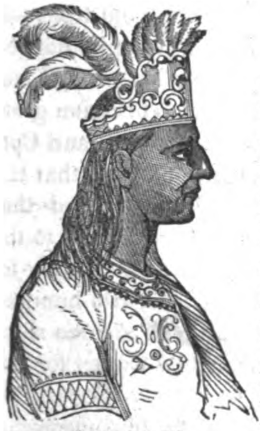
In the middle of December, having fixed a garrison of sixty invalid soldiers at Tepeaca, and made all his arrangements for the march to Mexico, Cortes returned to Tlascala. His advance was a perfect triumph. The trophies and the spoils of his victories were conspicuously displayed, and the natives poured out in masses to hail their return with songs, dancing, and music. Triumphal arches were every where erected along the route, the path was strewn with flowers, and the victorious general was further glorified in a reception speech by a Tlascalan orator, who styled him "The Avenger of the Nation." But what won the hearts of the natives even more than these successes, was the sight of Cortes and his officers all clad in deep mourning for the loss of their friend, Maxixca. The first act of the general was to settle the succession on the son of that cacique, whose right to the throne was disputed by an illegitimate brother. The young ruler was persuaded to be baptized, and Cortes afterwards knighted him.



Guatimozin.

ABOUT the same time the Mexicans, with one voice, called to the throne the prince Quauhtemotzin, rendered by the Spaniards Guatemozin, the son-in-law and nephew of Montezuma. He was but twenty-five years old, yet there was no more valiant man in Mexico, and none had so distinguished himself in the bloody conflicts of the capital. He knew b means of his spies the preparations and designs of Cortes against the capital, and he prepared to meet him in an effectual manner. All useless persons were sent away; the powerful vassals of the neighbourhood were called to the city in great numbers; the defences were strengthened; the troops were exercised daily in arms, and every incentive was resorted to which could inspire the masses with the same hatred of the invaders which filled the breast of the emperor.

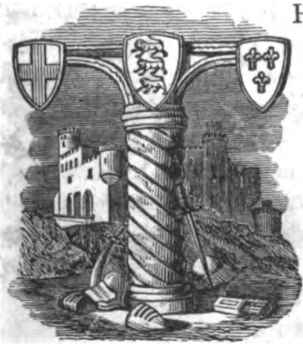
Cortes left Tlascala on his final march for Mexico, on the 28th of December, 1520. His force consisted of about six hundred Spaniards, with forty horses, nine cannons, and an indifferent supply of ammunition. A large body of the natives, Tlascalans, Tepeacans, and Cholulans followed him, and another army of these natives marched to the capital soon afterwards, guarding and assisting in the transportation of the brigantines. The general found many preparations made along the road for his reception; but he reached the city of Tezcuco without difficulty. To his surprise, the cacique of the city attempted negotiation for a few hours, while the population of the city, and he himself, abandoned it and fled to Mexico. On entering the city Cortes discovered their flight, and immediately took advantage of it to proclaim the cacique dethroned. Some of the Tezcucan nobles pointed out a person who favoured the Spaniards as the rightful heir to the throne, and Cortes elevated him to it. His people were by this means made allies of the army, and rendered good service where they could be trusted, under their general Ixtlilxochitl, the brother of the new king, and the man whom Montezuma had imbittered by his decision, when the disputed succession to the throne of Nezahualpilli was submitted to his arbitration.


Ixtlilxochitl.

THE new cacique of Tezcuco did not long survive his exaltation, and Ixtlilxochitl succeeded him. He was always afterwards the fast friend of the Spaniards, and contributed no little to their success. Making Tezcuco his head-quarters, Cortes employed himself for four months, while the preparations for launching the fleet were being made, with excursions into all the country around the lakes, sometimes acting in concert with his lieutenants, Sandoval and Alvarado, and sometimes in separate, independent expeditions. Every where the powerful genius of Guatemozin showed itself in opposition to him, and several of the most glorious battles of the conquest were fought in this preparatory campaign. The emperor displayed a devotion and patriotism that would have rendered his name immortal in other circumstances. On one occasion he opened the dikes and flooded the city of Iztapalapan when the Spaniards had stormed it, causing them to be nearly drowned in their retreat, spoiling their powder, and preventing them from carrying off any of the spoils.

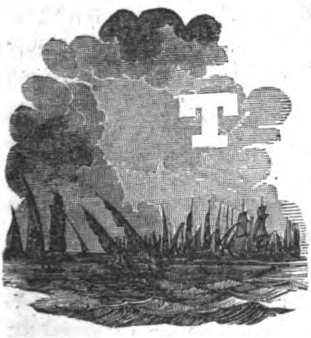
At Xochimilco, "the field of flowers," one of the most wealthy and beautiful cities on the lake, Cortes had the most narrow escape from death that befell him during the war. He had gained a victory, and taken the city, and the troops were hotly pursuing the fugitives through the streets. The general himself, with a few followers, remained near the entrance to the city. A fresh body of Indians suddenly poured into the place from a neighbouring dike. Cortes, knowing no fear, threw himself into the midst of the enemy, hoping to stop their advance. But he and his little party were quickly overwhelmed in the mass of the enemy, his horse fell, he received a very severe blow on the head, and his enemies seized him, and with shouts of triumph were bearing him off. A Tlascalan saw his danger. With the fury of a tiger he sprang to the rescue, and his superhuman efforts stopped their progress until two of the general's servants came to the rescue, and enabled him to regain his feet. He was soon in the saddle again, and the victorious pursuers, hearing the tumult in their rear, came back and ended the conflict. Cortes would have lost his life but for the eagerness of the enemy to take him prisoner. Many of the Spaniards saved their lives in consequence of this passion for living victims. Cortes sought in vain next day for his gallant Tlascalan preserver, and supposing him dead, attributed his salvation to his good patron, Saint Peter.

A conspiracy among his men, chiefly confined to the old troops of Narvaez, was happily discovered, and the leader promptly hanged from the windows of his own quarters. The Tlascalan chief, Xicotencatl, deserted the Spaniards in such a manner as to occasion great fears from the effects of his well-known animosity to them, and Cortes sent to the Tlascalan senate to demand his arrest, stating that the Spanish law punished desertion with death. They replied that their law was the same, and the royal captive was delivered to the Spaniards to be executed in the presence of, and as a warning to, his more faithful countrymen. During these operations, two hundred men, eighty horses, and a supply of ammunition, arrived in three ships at Vera Cruz, probably the ones sent to Jamaica by Cortes for reinforcements while he was at Tlascala.



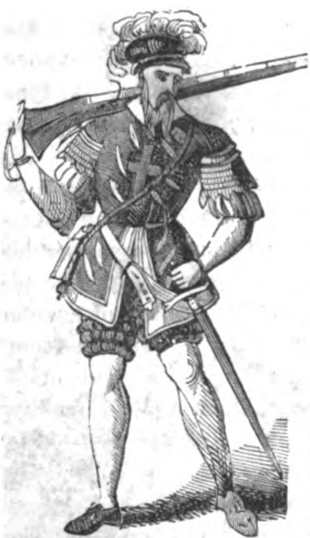
THIS welcome addition to his means of offence soon reached his camp. The brigantines were launched, twelve of the thirteen proving fit for service, and, though necessarily rude and imperfect, they gained at the outset a decisive victory over the canoes of the natives, and secured to the Spaniards the command of the lake. The operations in the neighbouring states, while they secured to Cortes the ability to turn his whole attention to the reduction of the city without fear of annoyance from without, greatly increased the number of the defenders of the capital, as each successive hostile army when defeated, marched thither for refuge, and to partake in the final struggle for its defence. Their very numbers, however, proved a disadvantage from the impossibility of sustaining them for any length of time, and contributed materially to hasten the fall of the city. Provisions were carried into the city, for a time, however, in great quantities, and even when the brigantines caused the open transportation by canoes to cease, the natives still contrived to administer to the necessities of the garrison by night. But this state of things changed when the great vassals in the vicinity found that Guatemozin was becoming more and more straightened in the capital, and of course less able to support and protect them. They revolted one by one, espoused the cause of Cortes, and sent their warriors in such numbers to aid him in the siege, that he became in turn seriously distressed for the means of feeding all his host.

The siege was regularly commenced on the 10th of May, 1521. The army was divided into three bodies, nearly equal in numbers. One, under Alvarado, was posted at Tlacopan, to operate on the western causeway; another, under Christoval de Olid, commanded one of the branches of the southern causeway at Cojohuacan, and the third, under the intrepid Sandoval, pushed on the attack from the other branch of the same causeway at Iztapalapan.



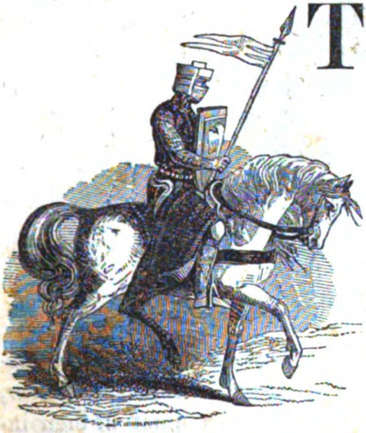
THE flotilla was under the command of Cortes himself, who assisted the operations of his lieutenants whenever his presence was necessary. Alvarado occasioned great distress in the capital by a successful attempt, made as soon as his post was assigned him, to cut off the aqueducts which supplied the city with water. During the rest of the siege the Mexicans were forced to drink the salt water of the lake, or depend upon the precarious supply introduced from without in canoes. For a month after the siege had been commenced, Cortes adhered to a plan by which he hoped to effect its reduction without destroying the city, which he destined to become his capital, and a monument of his glory. He pushed on the attack from all the three stations with vigour, but the Aztecs met him with valour only inferior to that of the Spaniards. When his troops had spent the day carrying barricades, filling up trenches and canals, and advancing their purpose, and had retired to their quarters for the night, the indefatigable foe sallied forth and repaired their works anew for the conflict on the morrow. Thus the toil and danger of the Spaniards were continually renewed, yet they struggled on in the hope of gaining some decisive advantage, which might force the enemy to surrender, and terminate the war. But they found that they greatly underrated the heroism of their foes.

On land and on water, by night and by day, one furious conflict succeeded another, and though the Spaniards had completed the occupation of the causeways, and the city was in a state of blockade, they seemed but little nearer their object than at first. Under this state of things, Cortes yielded to the solicitations of his officers to hazard an assault upon the city in the hope of getting possession of the great market of Tlatelolco, whose spacious porticoes would furnish accommodations for a numerous host, and by which an easy communication would be opened between the camps of Alvarado and Sandoval. The royal treasurer, Alderete, advocated this measure, and Cortes gave him the command of one body of his own division. Andres de Tapia and Jorge de Alvarado, a younger brother of Pedro, led the second body, and the third was under the direction of Cortes himself. These three bodies were to advance along the three parallel streets which led from the suburbs into the square of Tlatelolco. Cortes gave very strict orders not to advance without filling up all the ditches and openings in the causeway, in order to secure a retreat. In the ardour of battle this was neglected by Alderete, whose accounts of the success he met with filled the mind of Cortes with misgivings. He quitted his own body and followed in the track of the rash leader. Soon he came to a breach in the causeway, the sides of which gave evidence of their having very recently been trimmed off. It was twelve paces wide, and filled with water two fathoms deep. Scarcely any attempt had been made to fill it up, and Cortes saw that his rash officer had rushed into the snare laid for him. He set about filling up the chasm, when the great gong of Guatemozin was sounded, and in a moment the flying Aztecs turned on their pursuers with a fury that threw them into a panic. From every lane thousands of warriors poured upon their flanks, seizing the fugitives, and bearing them away alive to grace the altars of their gods. Missiles were poured upon their heads from the housetops, and they were unable, in the confusion, to distinguish their Indian allies from their foes. Cortes stood in the water at the breach, labouring with the most praiseworthy devotion to assist the poor fugitives to reach the further side of the breach, his well-known person, and his position, causing the darts, stones, and arrows from thousands of enemies, to be poured upon him. At length, with a cry of Malinche, six able-bodied warriors seized him suddenly, and attempted to drag him into their canoe. In the fight he was severely wounded in the leg, and his escape seemed hopeless, when a gallant warrior, Cristoval de Olea, came to his aid, cut off at a blow the arm of one savage, and ran another through the body with his sword. His own life was



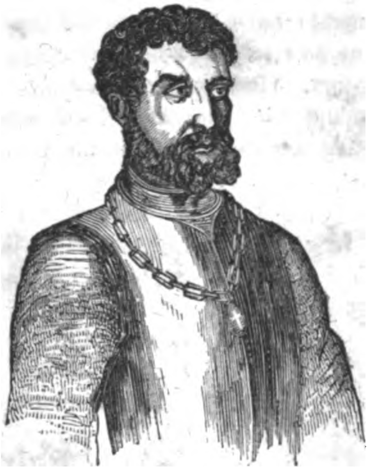
Jorge de Alvarado.

forfeited for his general; but a Tlascalan and another Spaniard were enabled by this time to come up, and they despatched three others of the general's captors. His horse was now brought to him, and he was assisted to mount him, but his chamberlain, Guzman, was snatched away by the enemy as he held the bridle, and carried off a captive.



THE general at length collected the remnant of the division at an opening where he had stationed a reserve with two guns, and the fire of the artillery served to check the advance of the enemy, while an orderly retreat was effected. Meanwhile the forces of Pedro de Alvarado and Sandoval had entered the city from the other causeway, and gained many advantages, but the gong which sounded for the assault on the troops of Alderete, produced an increase in the fury of their opponents, while the heads of their countrymen, which the enemy exhibited to them with cries, implying that Cortes was slain, satisfied them that the day had been lost by the other division, and they retreated. Cortes was also presented with the heads of his fallen warriors during the battle, and the enemy impressed him with the belief that both Alvarado and Sandoval were slain. The reunion between them was on this account extremely joyful, although their hearts were greatly cast down by the events of the day. Besides those who had fallen in fighting and the wounded, they had lost in prisoners sixty-two Spaniards and a multitude of allies, all of whom would certainly be sacrificed. In the evening, as the declining sun lit up the top of the teocalli, they saw several of their countrymen, whose white skins identified them as they were driven up the winding ascent of the temple, sacrificed in the usual mode. After their hearts were torn out, their bodies were tumbled off the top to make a feast for the cannibals below. This sight made the Spaniards sick at heart, while it inspired their enemies with resolution sufficient to make them vow that all their enemies should share the same fate, and attempted to fulfil it by a fearful assault upon the intrenchments. They paid dearly, however, for their temerity.

They were nevertheless so elated by their great victory, that the priests ventured to predict that in eight days all the Spaniards should be slain, for so their gods had decreed. The allies of the Spaniards



Pedro de Alvarado.

became terrified at this prediction, and nearly all withdrew to a distance to await in fear the event. Many of the caciques, however, remained in the camp, and Cortes kept his men quiet in their intrenchments until after the eight days had expired. Then the allies came back joyfully, in greater numbers than before. But these eight days had greatly weakened the starving defenders of the city, who were now rapidly circumscribed in their limits.

The Spaniards advanced gradually, but steadily, the allies filled up the ditches behind them and levelled with the ground every conquered edifice, and though the indomitable Guatemozin disputed every inch of ground, his resistance became daily weaker. Pestilence, the natural result of famine, and the number of unburied bodies which were lying in the streets filled up the measure of their woes.

Still did the dauntless Guatemozin refuse to capitulate. The daring Alvarado carried by assault the great teocalli, in the northern part of the city, on which they had seen so many of their countrymen sacrificed. He devoted the warriors and priests who defended it to the manes of his murdered countrymen, and announced his success to the other divisions of the army by burning the war-god and his sanctuary, and planting in triumph on the ruins the standard of Castile. The divisions of the beseigers now united in the city, seven-eighths of which was in ruins. Two murderous assaults were made on the 12th and 13th of August. On the 12th, by the aid of the allies, who totally disregarded the orders of Cortes to spare, the unresisting forty thousand of the Mexicans were slaughtered, and on the succeeding day the work of destruction was proceeding at a fearfully rapid rate, when Guatemozin was captured by one of the vessels in an attempt to escape to the main land. The glory of his arrest belongs to Captain Garci Holguin, who acted under the orders of the vigilant Sandoval. The news of the prince's capture spread through the fleet of canoes and the army on shore, and all resistance ended.

Guatemozin was conducted to Cortes, who treated him with respect and consideration. Donna Marina acted as his interpreter, a proud moment for her who had shared in the devotion of love the many vicissitudes through which the conqueror had passed. When the emperor and the conqueror met, Guatemozin first broke silence by saying, "I have done all that I could to defend myself and my people. I am now reduced to this state. You will deal with me, Malinche, as you list. Better despatch me with this," laying his hand on the hilt of a poniard in the general's belt, "and rid me of life at once." Filled with admiration, Cortes replied. "Fear not, you shall be treated with all honour. You have defended your capital like a brave warrior. A Spaniard knows how to respect valour even in an enemy."* He then caused the emperor's wife to be brought from the brigantine into his presence, and the royal captives and their attendant nobles were supplied with the food they so much needed. On the next day Cortes gave orders for the unmolested evacuation of the city by the Mexicans, according to Guatemozin's request, and the purification was commenced. Treasure was not to be found. The whole booty in the precious metals did not amount to as much as the Spaniards had left behind them, when they quitted the city on the Noche Triste, and though Cortes afterwards went so far as to put both the emperor and his treasurer to the torture, he did not succeed in discovering any hidden depositories of wealth.

"It was the hour of vespers," says Mr. Prescott,* "when Guatemozin surrendered, and the siege might be considered as then concluded, (August 3, 1521.) The evening set in dark, and the rain began to fall before the several parties of Spaniards had evacuated the city. During the night a tremendous tempest, such as the Spaniards had rarely witnessed, and such as is known only within the tropics, burst over the Mexican valley. The thunder reverberating from the rocky amphitheatre of hills, bellowed over the waste of waters, and shook the *teocallis* and crazy tenements of Tenochtitlan—the few that yet survived—to their foundations. The lightning seemed to cleave asunder the vault of heaven, as its vivid flashes wrapped the whole scene in a ghastly glare, for a moment, to be again swallowed up in darkness. The war of elements was in unison with the fortunes of the ruined city. It seemed as if the deities of Anahuac, scared from their ancient abodes, were borne along, shrieking and howling in the blast, as they abandoned the fallen capital to its fate!"

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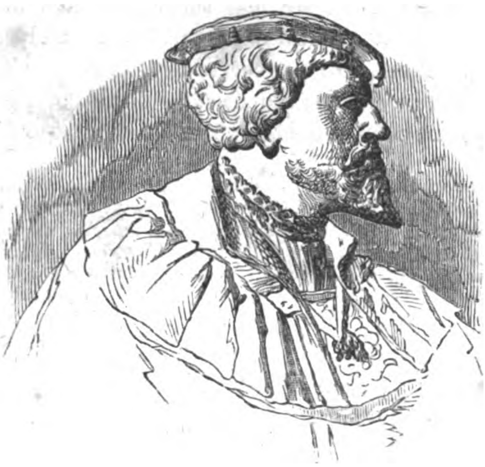
* Prescott, vol. iii. p. 205. † Ibid. viii. p. 207.

Cortes immediately assumed to himself the position which had been occupied by the Aztec emperor, as supreme lord of Anahuac, and commenced the rebuilding of the city of Mexico to serve for his own capital. The Indian allies, who had been so zealous in overturning the edifices which so adorned it, were now obliged to construct others to take their place. The buildings they erected are still standing, beautiful monuments of the wisdom of the conqueror, whose far-seeing eye looked to the necessities of future generations while occupied with the cares of the present. The capital occupied four years in building, during which time the lieutenants of Cortes overran the country, enforcing the authority of their leader, and exploring eagerly for the precious metals. If any warlike tribe presumed to lift its hand against the new rulers, its presumption was punished with more than Aztec severity, as a rebellion.

Yet while Cortes was consolidating this great monarchy, and serving his sovereign with such successful zeal, it was his singular fate not only to be destitute of any commission or authority from him, but to be looked upon as an undutiful and seditious subject. Fonseca, bishop of Burgos, whose treatment of Columbus and his son would alone have secured him an immortality of infamy, was the relative and friend of Velasquez, and consequently the most determined and powerful enemy of Cortes. The emperor, Charles V., had much to occupy his attention in the Low Countries, and in his absence the affairs of Spain were chiefly directed by the emperor's confessor, Adrian, who afterwards became pope. This prelate was induced to send out Christoval de Tapia, as a commissioner to supersede Cortes, seize his person, confiscate his effects, and institute an inquiry into his proceedings, the results of which were to be sent to the council of the Indies in Spain, of which Fonseca was the president. But Cortes was too good a diplomatist to be overcome by this creature of his enemies. He bribed, cajoled, and overawed Tapia, and induced him to leave the country he was unfit to govern, even though he went to Spain to prosecute the cause of the conqueror's enemies before the emperor. Charles had now the leisure necessary to attend to the affairs of New Spain; and he appointed a tribunal of the highest integrity and talent to hear the allegations of both parties, and deal out justice to all concerned. Before this board the advocates of the conqueror argued his cause with such power and earnestness, that the decision in favour of Cortes was



Charles V.

unanimous; his acts were confirmed in their fullest extent, and he was constituted governor, captain-general, and chief justice of New Spain, with power to appoint all officers, civil and military, and to order any person to leave the country whose residence there he might deem prejudicial to the interests of the crown. The commission of the emperor, confirming Cortes in the exercise of these ample powers, was signed at Valladolid, October 15, 1522.

One act more added to those by which he had sullied his fame, remains to be noticed. This was his final injustice to the unfortunate Guatemozin. Sandoval had found in Panuco an enemy as formidable as any they had hitherto encountered, and whose determined opposition he silenced by burning sixty caciques and four hundred of their nobles. This act of cruelty, more atrocious than Alvarado's massacre of the nobles and priests in the temple of Mexico, prepared the way for another dreadful example of severity, committed by Cortes himself. This was the execution, by hanging, of the unfortunate Guatemozin, and the two caciques of Tezcuco and Tacuba, who were put to death without even the formality of a trial, because they were suspected, on slight evidence, of being concerned in a scheme for reestablishing the independence of their country.

The accusations of his enemies caused Cortes to return to Spain to plead his own cause before the emperor. He was kindly received, and his acts sanctioned, and he returned to Mexico in 1530. In 1540 he again went to the mother country, where he died in 1547, in the sixty-third year of his age. During his government of the country, he discovered California, and led an expedition into Honduras, but his enterprises were less successful than before, and he experienced the fate of all who distinguished themselves in the New World. From the emperor he received cold civility; from his ministers, neglect and insolence; from nearly all his cotemporaries, envy and malice, and from succeeding generations, admiration and fame.*

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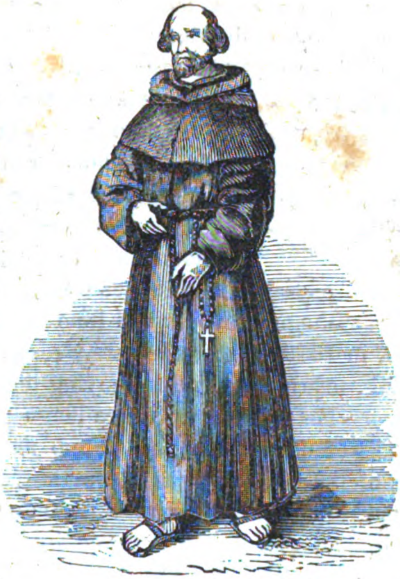
* Every one who wishes for complete, detailed, and accurate information respecting the ancient Mexicans, the conquest by Cortes, and the subsequent career of Cortes himself, should consult the admirable work of Mr. Prescott, to which we have so frequently referred, and which is our authority for the facts in this chapter. It is not only the best authority on the subject, but it is one of the most entertaining and readable books in the language.

CHAPTER VI.

MEXICO UNDER THE SPANIARDS.

THE first thought of the conquerors was of propagandism. Cortes had seen, from the hour of landing in the country, that the best means of securing the fidelity of the natives was by converting them to Christianity, and though his efforts for the purpose were such as a soldier might be expected to make, violent and brutal, they were nevertheless ardent and sincere. He and his successors had no mercy for the Mexican faith. The idols were broken and burned; the teocallis were razed to the ground; no priest was spared. Monks of both the orders of St. Francisco and St. Augustine, and Dominican friars, flocked to the country during the age succeeding the conquest; and, carried forward by a laudable zeal, extended the sway of the church beyond even that of the government. Every where they found the minds of the people shaken with fear, and ready, as they bent in submission to the strangers, to transfer their homage from Aztec idols to the Christian's Deity. Cortes had availed himself of the ancient tradition respecting Quetzalcoatl, in promoting his designs against the empire. The priests went further, and by pious frauds endeavoured to make the natives believe that the Gospel had been preached in America at a very early period; they found traces of their own faith in the Aztec code, and allowed a latitude to their liturgy hitherto unexampled in the history of the church. The passion of the Indians for flowers was sanctified, dances and disguises were allowed on holidays, even in the interior of the churches; the sacred eagle of the Aztecs was made to serve as an introduction for the Holy Spirit; and, to sum up all in a word, every thing to which the Indians were attached that did not interfere with the main articles of the Christian faith, was respected, and incorporated, to a greater or less extent, in the new ritual. This spirit of accommodation on the part of the clergy, joined to the settled will of the conquerors, explains the rapid spread of the religion of the cross in the new country, in spite of the ardent attachment of the Mexicans to the polytheism of their ancestors. According to Torquemada, the Franciscans baptized six millions of converts in the period extending from 1524 to 1540. Guatemozin, and the small remnant of Mexican nobles who escaped the swords of the Spaniards, embraced the new faith, and the royal family of Tezcuco did the same. Perhaps from the influence of the character and precepts of the wise Nezahualcoyotl and his son, their successors were the most sincere in their professions of the new faith; at all events, Ixtlilxochitl, the chief of the little kingdom, the son of Nezahualpilli, and the faithful ally of Cortes, was the most distinguished by his zeal in the service of the true church. He embraced with great affection, Father Martin, of Valentia, and twelve monks who accompanied him; lodged them in the palace of his ancestors; learned from them with wonderful facility the mysteries of the cross and the passion, and then, taking up the work of the missionaries, he lectured to his subjects, and, by a judicious mixture of precept and command, soon had them ready for baptism. The ceremony of baptizing began to be laborious, and the monks invented an ingenious plan for abridging the ceremony. They divided the multitudes into classes, and conferred the same name at the same time on all the individuals of a class.

The royal preacher was even more zealous than the churchmen



Father Martin, of Valentia.

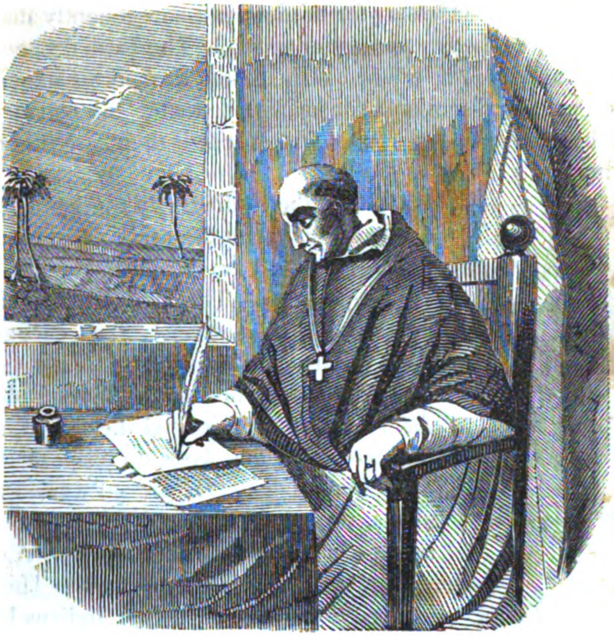
themselves. The old queen, his mother, held firmly to the worship of her gods, and was in consequence in great danger of being burned alive, by her pious son. He preached to her, adduced the best of reasons for embracing the new faith, and finally triumphed over her scruples by carrying her off to the church, where she was baptized by the name of Mary.

Notwithstanding the inutility of such wholesale conversion as regarded many of its subjects, it was beneficial in so far as it abolished all visible signs of the bloody worship of the Aztecs, and prepared the way for the rise of sentiments of a purer cast in the bosoms of the natives. The violent zeal of the bishops is more clearly seen to have been good policy, when we learn that such of the temples as were hidden in the woods and mountains, and escaped destruction at the hands of the Christians, had their regular attendants for many years, some of whom, though they had received the Christian sign on their foreheads, preserved their attachment to their first faith in their hearts. There were thousands of them, however, who were sincere in their conversion, and who retained only one feature of their ancient religion, their excessive veneration for its ministers, which they transferred to the Christian priests. These warriors of the cross constantly opposed their authority to the rapacious and pitiless soldiers of Castile.

THEY stood between the conquerors and the vanquished, extended the cross between the sword and the victim, protected weakness and misfortune every where; and every where weakness and misfortune clung to them as the tender ivy clasps the sturdy oak on which it creeps. For ages the poor Indians pronounced with the greatest love and veneration the names of Sahagun and Las Casas. The first, whose Franciscan name of Sahagun was derived from the city of his birth, arrived in Mexico, in 1529, and immediately resolved to consecrate his life to consoling, instructing, and improving the condition of the unfortunate natives. He studied the Aztec language with such success that the learned among them regarded him as a classic model, and the remnants of the kindred dynasties of Mexico and Tezcuco, made him their patron and their friend. Antonio de Mendoza, the first viceroy of Mexico, was prevailed upon by the representations of the good father to found a college for the instruction of the young Indians, who were in turn to educate their countrymen. He spread abroad a feeling of enmity towards all who were interested in brutalizing the people, and the good father was always found where injury was to be combatted, griefs consoled, or misery solaced. His death was a calamity deeply felt and long mourned by his unfortunate friends.

The famous Las Casas rivalled him in his indefatigable zeal in the cause of humanity, and by his importunities and representations, the Spanish and papal sovereigns were induced to extend protection to the Indians by the authority of their edicts. These were not much respected, in the first ages after the conquest, it is true, and similar ordinances had to be issued from time to time, for the same purpose, but they were useful in establishing as law the principle, that, though legally disabled from participating in the government, the natives were still freed from vassalage and from burdensome taxes.

They afterwards came under the protection of the priests, who exercised their patronage with laudable humanity. But in the first years after the conquest, the court of Madrid was unable to make its authority rigidly respected in America, and Mexican history presents a period of military anarchy, in which force and caprice usurped the place of right. All landholders, except the small number of nobles, admitted into the Spanish army, or whom alliance with the conquerors protected, were despoiled. To this poor nobility and its vassals were left only a small portion of land among the churches.



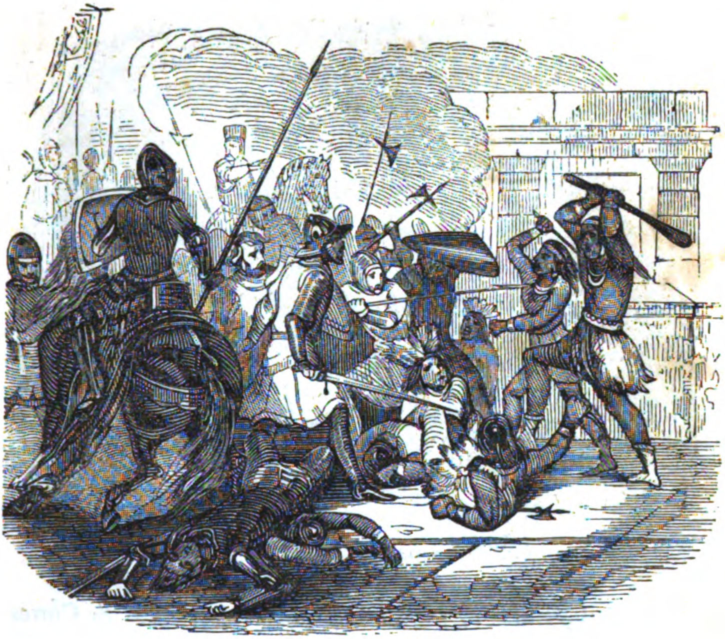
Las Casas.

The aborigines were employed as beasts of burden, to carry baggage and drag cannon, and, as auxiliary troops, were placed in the front rank to receive the first weight of the enemy's onset. In the early expeditions of the conquerors they fought for their tyrants against their brothers, and death in its most awful forms, famine, and pestilence, swept them from the land.

At length, when their total extinction seemed not far distant, the decrees of the Spanish court began to be executed, and the oppression of the Indians was regulated, slavery took legal forms. The natives were attached to the soil, and shared out with it among the distinguished soldiers of the conquest, and the officers sent out from the mother country to govern the province, by means of *encomiendas* or fiefs. The holders of these fiefs, *encomienderos*, fortunately did not imitate the feudatory lords of Europe in the building of fortresses, but contented themselves by creating haciendas or large farms, in which they lived in dwellings constructed after the fashion of the Aztec nobility. No attempt was made to change the productions of the soil, and the mass of the people remained as before the conquest, poor and debased. They worked contentedly for their masters, attached themselves to their interests, and often assumed their names. Fortunately for them, their conquerors possessed neither the funds nor the knowledge necessary for mining, and consequently they were not forced to bury themselves under ground. The earth dragged from the mountains by the rivers and torrents was washed for its gold, but the mines were undiscovered for many years after the conquest, and brought but little to those who first worked them. What a great gain to humanity!

THE lot of the Indians, up to the eighteenth century, was much the same with that of the European serfs; but since then it has gradually improved. The families of the conquerors became extinct, the encomiendas were not distributed anew, and the viceroys, careful of the interests of the Indians, declared them free, and recognized their right, as they belonged to themselves, to dispose of their own persons. The *mita*, forced working in the mines, was abolished, and this kind of labour became voluntary and compensated. A curious system of abuse, however, existed long in the country. This arose from the *repartimientos*, or forced sales made to the Indians by Spanish agents. A debt incurred by an Indian could be collected by reducing him to servitude, and when a Spaniard desired to buy an Indian, he had only to sell him a mule, a saddle, or a cloak, at any price he chose, and take the unfortunate fellow himself in payment. Charles the Third of Spain, who in many ways proved himself the benefactor of the Americans, put an end to this infamous system.

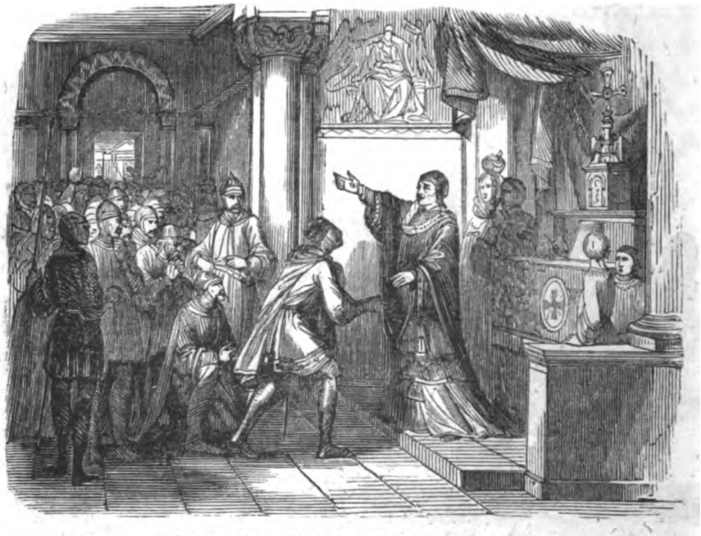
For many years after the conquest, the spirit of independence agitated many of the warlike nations of Mexico, and the Spanish viceroys were obliged to be continually on their guard against them. Of these, the Chichimecs were most distinguished for their desperate resistance to the Spanish yoke. They were the most savage tribe yet encountered in America, and their ferocity was rendered still more formidable by their admirable discipline. Living in the forests on the products of nature and the chase, they became excellent archers and hardened warriors, and in battle they fought with a system and order unknown to any other Mexican tribe. They formed their army into battalions, seven men deep; their ranks were close; their movements regular; and their whole field exercise so complete, that the Spaniards were disposed to think that a refugee from their own nation had been instructing them in the art of war. They were not content in battle with beating back an assaulting enemy; they followed up their success in good order, until the camp of the enemy was in their possession, and the fugitives beyond their reach, when



Defeat of the Quiches.

they returned to their families to exhibit, as trophies of their prowess, the scalps of the slaughtered foe. While the other nations of Anahuac had been weakened in the conflicts with the Spaniards, and each other, the Chichimecs had been gradually increasing in power and numbers, and they at length advanced to within fifteen leagues of the capital, in the province of Xalisco. The Spaniards fitted out an expedition from Mexico under Christoval de Onate, to conquer them. He experienced a complete overthrow, however, and despatched couriers for aid to Alvarado, who hastened from his province of Guatimala to succour him. The war was continued with the most desperate bravery on both sides, until the death of Alvarado. This was occasioned by an accident met with in battle. The enemy occupied a rocky mountain height, from which the assailants made repeated efforts to expel them. In one of these engagements, a horse stumbled and rolled headlong down a steep declivity; Alvarado happened to be ascending the same hill, and was unable to get out of the way of the rolling horse, which carried him down and lay upon him when both reached the bottom. He was so badly crushed by the fall, and the irritation of his wounds caused by being carried a three days' journey for medical help, that he shortly afterwards expired.

Alvarado had pursued a career since the conquest of Mexico only

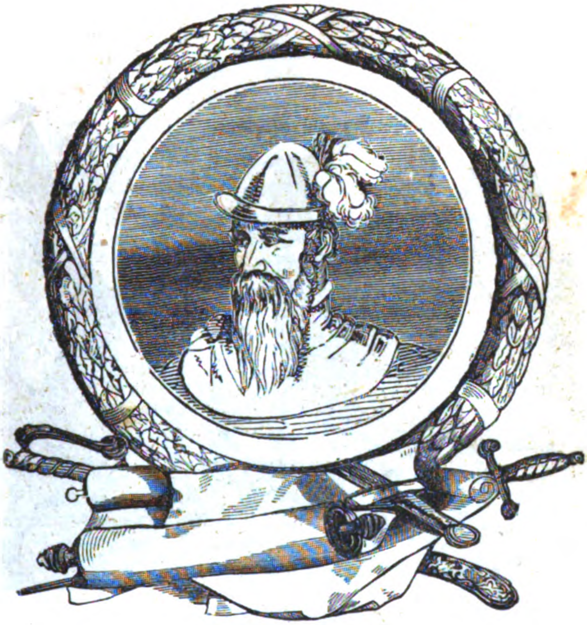


Celebration of the founding of St. Jago.

less glorious than that of Cortes himself. Despatched by Cortes to conquer Guatimala, he commenced his march in 1523, with thirty-five horsemen, three hundred infantry, two hundred Tlascalans and Cholulans, a hundred Mexicans, and four pieces of artillery.

In Tecum Uman, the king of the Quiches, he found an enemy worthy to be dreaded by any of the great captains of the age. He assembled an army of more than two hundred thousand men, and as the Spaniards advanced through the Cordilleras, met them at every pass, and disputed their passage with the most heroic determination; and the slaughter was so great that the very river ran red from the blood poured into it from the mountains. At length the main body of the Quiches and the Spaniards met in a pitched battle on the open plain. The king boldly singled out Alvarado, and offered him battle in person: it was accepted, and the royal hero fell a victim to his gallantry. His subjects continued the battle, however, and avenged his death by killing many of their enemies. They lost the battle, however, and the new king attempted to destroy his enemy by stratagem. He was detected, however, and himself inveigled by Alvarado into a snare, made prisoner, and hung. The Quiches renewed the war, and were only subdued after repeated and terrible defeats.

When they had once submitted to his yoke, they proved as serviceable to him in establishing his authority over the whole country, as the Tlascalans had been to Cortes, and the boldness and rapacity which had marked his course in Mexico, being tempered by the

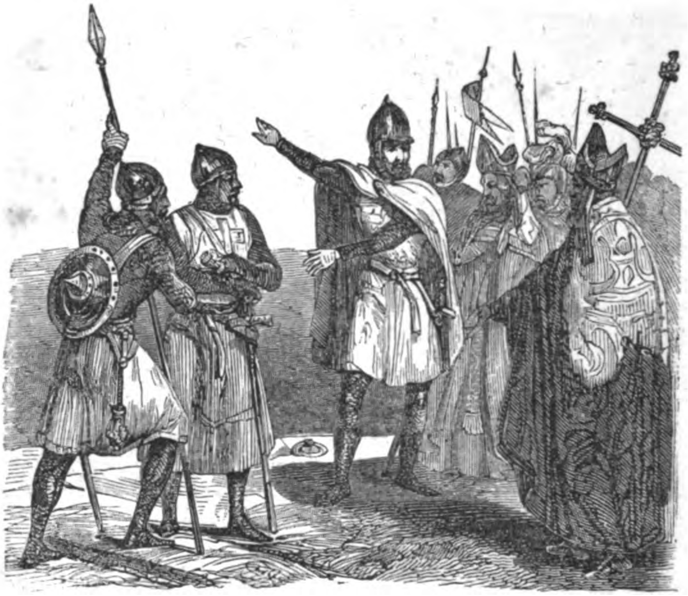


Pizarro.

lessons of prudence and watchfulness taught him there by disaster, fitted him for the arduous duty.

He founded the city of St. Jago on the 25th of July, 1524, as the permanent seat of his new colony, and returned from his successive expeditions laden with wealth and covered with glory. Pursuing the course of conquest so brilliantly opened to him, he marched into South America, where he encountered the forces of Pizarro. That officer, however, avoided hostilities, and purchased the retreat of Alvarado by a magnificent present. In the full tide of prosperity, however, the generous soldier gallantly marched to assist a brother Spaniard in distress, and, as we have seen, met his death, leaving the companions he had so often led to victory inconsolable at his loss.

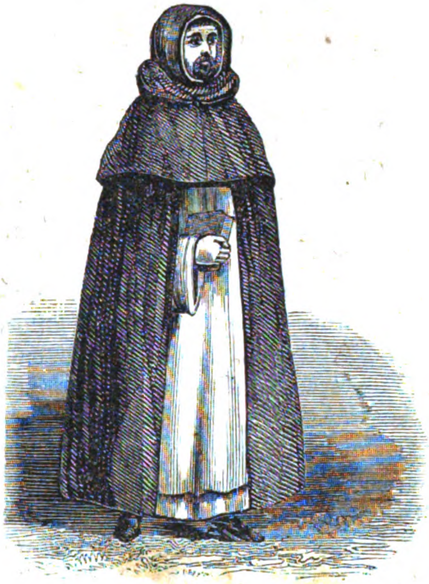
More than two years of fighting were necessary to overcome this able tribe, and their final reduction was only effected when the viceroy, Mendoza, summoned to his aid a host of fifty thousand Indians of Tlascala, Cholula, and Tepeaca, who seem to have had for their mission the conquest of all Anahuac for the crown of Castile. Conquered, but unsubjected, the Chichimecs long remained formidable, and the city of San Miguel was built, and those of Durango and San Sebastian enlarged, as a means of protection against them. There were, in other parts of the country, partial revolts against the Spanish



Priests welcoming the arrival of Soldiers.

authority, but these were generally suppressed without difficulty, and only served to render the Spanish yoke more heavy.

Meanwhile new cities were erected in every part of the country, new populations came from Spain, Cuba, and Saint Domingo, attracted by the fertility of the soil, the pursuit of commerce, which reaped many harvests; by the demand for the productions of the new country, sugar, cocoa, cochineal, indigo, and cotton; and, above all, by the desire of discovering natural sources of wealth, mines of gold and silver. The viceroys encouraged all private enterprises for these purposes, and the exploration and development of the new province was chiefly effected in this manner. The missionaries, too, did much to widen the limits of the empire. Entering the territories of hostile nations in the fearlessness which usually accompanies a high sense of duty, they induced the unconquerable natives to submit to their spiritual sway, by the holiness of their lives, the gentleness of their demeanour, and their incessant, judicious exhortations. The work of conversion accomplished, to welcome their countrymen in arms, and transfer the civil allegiance of those whom they had reduced to spiritual subjection, was attended with little difficulty. Other expeditions were also undertaken to extend the jurisdiction of the viceroys. Alvaro Nunez, surnamed Cabeca de Vaca, (one of three hundred Spaniards who had landed with Narvaez in Florida, and,



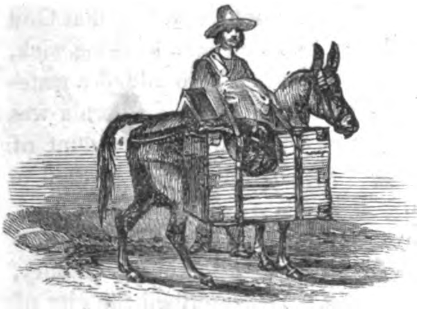
Marco de Nizza.

escaping with three others from the massacre of the detachment, wandered several years across Louisiana and Mexico to the coast of the province of La Sonora,) published, in 1537, a mendacious account of his thousand hairbreadth escapes, and the wonderful nations and countries he had visited. Others, highly gifted with credulity and powers of the imagination, added to his account by stating that God had contributed to his escape by giving him power to heal the sick, and even to raise the dead, to which the modest hero added a statement, forgotten in his first narrative, that the coast of California was carpeted with pearls. Scarcely less marvellous was the account of Marco de Nizza, a monk, whom Las Casas had caused to be sent to convert the Indians of La Sonora.

This functionary penetrated far to the north of the Gulf of California, and returned to give a picture of the civilization of the country, replete with the most fantastic colouring. He described the city of Cibola and seven others, all imaginary, whose houses were of stone, two stories high, with the doors enriched with turquoises, and whose inhabitants ate out of gold plates. Charity towards the holy father compels us to admit the supposition which some have advanced, that the stories of Cibola and the seven sister cities grew out of an ardent imagination, and the ill understood accounts of the savages of the Casas Grandes of the Rio Gila, a supposed station of the Aztecs, whose ruins are said, by a recent traveller, to be those of a city capable of containing twenty thousand inhabitants.

The stories of Marco de Nizza led to an expedition under Vasquez de Coronado, whose miraculous account of his adventures, establishes only this truth, that he encountered a brave and hostile people, whose hard knocks reminded him so unpleasantly of the warm embraces of a young and wealthy wife whom he had left behind him, that he abandoned the scheme of conquest in disgust, and hastened to return to her.

The intrepid Francisco Ybarra was more skilful and successful in the career of adventurous cupidity than his predecessors. After having, by order of the viceroy, Velasco, visited and pacified a part of the country of Zacatecas, he discovered the mines of Saint Martin and Saint Luke de Avino. To secure their possession he laid, between Zacatecas and Santa Barbara, the foundations of a succession of cities, then gaining by the orth the valley of the Gaudiana, where the city of Durango was being built, he ran over the provinces of Topia and Sinaloa with a handful of brave followers, marking his passage by high deeds of arms and new colonies, to which he left a few men for garrisons, thus carrying the Spanish power a hundred leagues into the country where its name had hardly yet penetrated. He afterwards returned to found the colony of Chiametta, in the neighbourhood of rich mines of silver. The metallic vein of Tasco was the first worked. Soon after those of Sultepee, Hapujahua, and Pachuca, were opened. The exploring of the different mines of Zacatecas followed immediately.



THOSE of Santa Barbara were attacked in 1548. About this time some mule drivers, travelling from Mexico to Zacatecas, discovered the silver mines of the district of Guanaxuato. The principal vein, the Veta Madre, was found in 1560. The mines of Comanjas are believed to be still older than those of Guanaxuato. In these early days, however, the mines were not worked with any great activity, for though cupidity was not wanting, the necessary capital and means of extracting the ore were not to be had. Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, the produce of all the mines of Mexico, did not amount to more than six hundred thousand marks of gold and silver per annum.

The discovery and colonization of New Mexico, the most northern part of New Spain, form part of the history of the sixteenth century. Here again the holy fathers of the church formed the van-guard, the armed expedition of Captain Espejo following that of the pious father Augustin Ruiz, who perished a victim to his great religious zeal. According to the captain's report, he found the country inhabited by a people who had already made considerable advances on the road to civilization. These small savage nations appeared, from their weapons and domestic customs, to be remotely allied to the Aztec race; but the resemblance may have chiefly consisted in the remoteness of both from the enlightenment of the Europeans. Espejo gave an account of them abounding in fable, which was readily believed by the governors of New Spain. Don Juan de Onate received a commission to take possession of his country and colonize it, which he did in the last year of the sixteenth century. The banks of the Rio del Norte were peopled with Europeans, and the seventeenth century was commenced by an effort on the part of Christianity to extend its influence over the Indians, to plant the cross in the midst of savages who were then and are yet the terror of the Spanish race. From their constant hostility has arisen the want of equilibrium in the population of New Mexico, the effect of the people clustering round the towns and cities as a means of defence.

WHILE New Spain was thus extending her limits, the provincial council of 1585 laid in Mexico the foundation of the organization and discipline of the church, and proceeded to reforms which met the approval of Sextus V. Among these was the repeal of a decree made by a council which had assembled thirty years before, that no native should become a priest. The baseness of their condition might, it was feared, throw discredit upon the ecclesiastical state; but the council of 1585, provided for the admission of the aborigines to the sacred orders, at first, it is true, under severe restrictions, which, as time wore away, these came to be disregarded, and the red race numbered the greater part of the clergy at the time of the revolution. The Inquisition also established itself in Mexico during the sixteenth century. The fiscal arrangements of the church began to be oppressive to the poor Indians, who at first attempted revolt; but found that this only made their burden heavier, and therefore adopted quiet submission as their best policy.

The Spanish government also injured their lot, by forbidding them, upon pain of death, to cultivate the vine or the olive tree, and reserving to herself a monopoly of other branches of agriculture, and many of the most productive manufactures. Two visitations of contagion in 1545 and 1577, carried off two millions five hundred thousand of the poor aborigines.

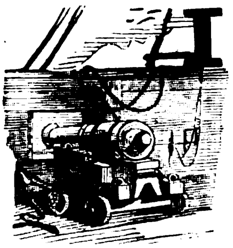
SPAIN, anxious to hide from the other nations of Europe, all the riches of her conquests in the New World, shrouded with mystery every thing connected with them. The only accounts of Mexico at this early day, are such as were published by travellers, who drew upon their imaginations for the greater part of their facts, and in whose statements not the least reliance can be placed. The principal authority for the internal affairs of this inaccessible country during the latter half of the seventeenth century, is the work of Thomas Gage, whose severity in handling the Mexican priesthood, may furnish an explanation of the zeal with which his work was decried. He introduces his readers into the convents and religious institutions of New Spain, and describes the monks as greedy of riches and worldly pleasures, and winking at the excesses of the people in order to get their wealth into their own coffers. The fathers of mercy are exhibited to us as they proceed to the election of a new provincial, disputing in the commencement, and terminating by a conflict with knives. On either side, the good monks displayed so lively a zeal in the cause of their favourite candidate, that the intervention of the viceroy and his guard became necessary in order to prevent the election from terminating even less canonically.

The same traveller tells us another story, which speaks very favourably for the compassion of the priesthood for the people. However heavy they made the ecclesiastical yoke, they were not willing that the viceroys should add, in any considerable degree, to the civil burden of the natives. In 1624, there occurred a great struggle between the archbishop, Alonzo de Zerna, and the viceroy, the Marquis de Gelves. The latter was an able governor, strictly just, and the terror of all evil doers, yet unfortunately the qualities of a good statesman were tarnished by his insatiable avarice. His cupidity inspired him with a desire of speculating in corn, and his agent, Don Pedro Mexio, equally avaricious with himself, rich and very adroit, purchased all the harvest in the countries near the capital, and when master of the market, fixed the price at what he pleased. The starving people came to the viceroy for redress. But he was a party to the transaction, and of course they were not listened to. They then applied to the archbishop, whose only means of assistance was spiritual thunder, very great quantities of which were fulminated against the offender. Mexio was excommunicated. He raised the price of corn. The prelate laid the capital under an interdict; a very unselfish measure, when it is considered that he thereby cut off from the church revenues the sum of six hundred dollars daily, which would have been received for the saying of masses.

The viceroy in vain attempted to have the interdict taken off, and therefore ordered the arrest of the archbishop as a disturber of the public peace and guilty of high treason. The bishop took refuge in his cathedral as in an inviolable asylum, put on his robes of office, and placed himself on the steps of the altar, holding in one hand the holy sacrament, and in the other his crozier. But one Tirol, the chief of the officers of justice, whose familiarity with crime had probably seared his conscience, speedily convinced the worthy prelate of the weakness of his defences, by arresting him. The viceroy then conducted him, under a strong guard, to Vera Cruz, and shipped him to Spain in a state vessel. But the priests inveighed against this high-handed measure, and roused the passions of the mob, who attempted to wreak their vengeance on Tirol. He fled for safety to the palace of the viceroy, and thereby turned the tide of popular resentment against that officer himself. The mob burst open the prison doors, and receiving an accession to their force from its inmates, prepared to storm the palace. The viceroy had the royal standard raised, and the trumpet blown, as a signal of danger to the Spaniards. But they were equally opposed to a monopoly of the corn market, and no one moved in any manner to effect his deliverance. He therefore fled in the disguise of a monk, while the mob overpowered his little guard, broke into the palace, and pillaged it. The viceroy remained in the convent where he first found refuge, for the rest of the year. Alarmed at such a wicked example, the court of Spain hastened to send out a new viceroy, with an inquisition of Valladolid, charged to punish those concerned in the rebellion. These were so many, and persons of so great importance besides, that he was obliged to content himself with hanging a few miserable wretches, who ought to have rejoiced at their deliverance from the ills of life, and with deposing some of the public functionaries.

On this occasion, however, the creoles and red men gave vent to their hatred of the metropolitan government, and indicated what might be expected of them should an opportunity occur for shaking off the Spanish yoke.

Another evidence of the regard of the priests for the people was given by the Archbishop Manzo y Zuniga, who, when the city of Mexico was inundated by the waters of the lake, distinguished himself by his benevolence. The city had suffered from the rising of the waters in 1553, 1580, 1604, and 1607, and repeated attempts had been made to avert the danger. At one time sixteen thousand natives were employed upon the construction of an aqueduct, which, however, was abandoned before completion, in consequence of the preference given by the court at Madrid to a Dutchman named Adrien Boot, who proposed to prevent all damage by a system of dikes, which was, in fact, the Indian system. On the 20th of June, 1629, the city of Mexico was inundated to the depth of more than three feet.* The inundation lasted five years, during which time the misery of the lower classes was very great. The streets were only passable in boats; and day after day the good archbishop might be seen paddling about in his canoe, as he bore bread and blessings to the unfortunate and suffering poor. At length the viceroy caused the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe to be brought to the city of Mexico, and paraded about the streets, to which circumstance, as well as to an earthquake, which happened about this time, and changed very much the surface of the valley, so as to form a natural drain, is no doubt owing the deliverance of the city, in 1634.



IN the year 1680, the attention of the buccaneers was attracted to the coast of Mexico, and three years afterwards two Dutchmen, and a Frenchman, named Grammont, made a descent upon new Vera Cruz, at the head of twelve hundred men. They entered the city in the night; Graff, one of the leaders, seized the fortress, with its twelve guns, and turned them on the city. The Spaniards, aroused by the artillery, flew to arms, and a severe contest ensued, in which the buccaneers were victorious. They took a great many prisoners, some of them the most noble and wealthy citizens. These they shut up in a church, so disposed that they could blow it up at any time, and then pillaged the city, bearing all the valuables to their vessels. They secured twelve or fifteen hundred thousand dollars in this way, and then bargained with their prisoners for a ransom. They at length freed them, on receiving two millions of piastres, and sailed away with their booty. Two years afterwards the same adventurers, under the command of Grammont, captured Campeachy, where they remained two months, employed in pillage. During this time, Grammont celebrated the festival, in commemoration of St. Louis of France, by burning, in a bonfire, dyewood to the value of a million of francs.

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* A meter.

ON the Pacific coast, Mexico was more fortunate. There the Jesuit missionaries advanced to the peaceful conquest of California, about which very little had, up to this time been known. These zealous Christians had to struggle against every difficulty, the rivalry and enmity of the Franciscans, the condition of the savages, and the want of protection from their government. They steadily prosecuted their labours, however, and in time obtained a complete triumph. They not only converted the natives, and obtained for themselves the spiritual government of California, but all the soldiers sent into the country were under the orders of the spiritual father. From 1697 to 1721, they were particularly active in exploring the coasts, and determining the character of the peninsula, its geological features, and the nature of its productions.

The Jesuits were the conquerors of the country. They subdued it with their most powerful weapon, the Holy Scriptures. Their establishments, during the first sixty years of the eighteenth century, were in full progress. There were then sixteen principal missions, on which more than forty villages were dependent. The Jesuits displayed in the work of civilization, apostolic zeal; commercial industry, prudent and wise administration, and the activity to which so much of their success is to be attributed, and which exposed them to so many calamities in the Indies. Fanaticism did not guide their steps. They came among the savages of California with toys and curiosities to amuse them, and wheat to nourish them. The hatred of this people for the Spanish name was vanquished by the benevolence of their instructers. They made themselves carpenters, masons, weavers, architects, and agriculturalists. Since their expulsion, in 1767, the administration of California was confided to the Dominicans of Mexico, and the prosperity of the missions vanished with their skilful founders.

The whole of the territories held by the Spaniards in America was divided into four viceroyalties, Mexico, Peru, Buenos Ayres, and New Grenada; and five captain-generalships, Yucatan, Guatimala, Venezuela, Chili, and the Island of Cuba. The captain-generals were independent of the viceroys, and these latter of each other. In Mexico, the viceroy was invested with royal prerogatives, and considered as *alter ego* of the king himself. The only checks upon his authority were the *Residencia* and the *Audiencia*, one a legal investigation into his conduct, which might be instituted by the king on his return to the mother country, and the other a court of appeal, which held its sittings in the colony. The Residencia was seldom if ever ordered, and the viceroy held the office of honorary president of the Audiencia, and usually was on the best of terms with it. The power of the Audiencia, however, was considerable: it exercised a control over all other tribunals, ecclesiastical as well as civil, except the object of litigation exceeded in value ten thousand dollars, and it possessed the power of communicating directly with the Council of the Indies, which had been created by Ferdinand II., in 1511, for the exclusive superintendence of the affairs of the colonies. The members of the Audiencia were always selected with the greatest care, and every possible measure was taken to keep them distinct from the natives, in interest and feelings. They, with the viceroys, and the children of all, were forbidden to intermarry with a creole, or to engage in trade, or even to hold property in the country over which they presided. In the event of the viceroy's decease, the oldest auditor exercised the functions of the regent until a new viceroy was appointed. Other privileges were held by the members of this court, which more than compensated for the domestic restrictions laid upon them.

THE laws by which the province was governed were involved in such a state of chaos that to obtain justice in any case seemed almost hopeless. The "Recopilacion de las Leyes de las Indias," or "General Collection of the Laws of the Indies," is the name given in Spanish jurisprudence to a heterogeneous mass of statutes by which, during the last three centuries, the decisions of the Mexican tribunals were supposed to be regulated. These were merely decrees upon different subjects emanating directly from the king or the council of the Indies, often contradictory, having no other connection with each other than what arose from their being bound up and published together in four folio volumes. No attempt was made to classify them, and they presented throughout glaring inconsistencies. Every new case became the subject of a new decree, which, immediately upon its publication, acquired the force of law, and tended still further to complicate the judicial code. The decrees not contained in the Recopilacion were more numerous than those which were, and many of both were repealed by subsequent statutes, and finally the best lawyers themselves could not distinguish between those decrees which were in force, those which were dead letters, and those which had been wholly or in part annulled. Of course the defendant could always find some decree which sheltered him from the penalty of the injuries he had inflicted on others; and corruption in the administration of justice was never at a loss for a plea amid the multiplicity and contrariety of the laws.

THIS confusion was increased by the *Fueros*, or special privileges, enjoyed by the different professional and corporate bodies. Thus there were Fueros of the clergy, embracing every class or body connected in any way with the church; Fueros of all persons employed in public offices, of the merchants, of the militia, the navy, the engineers, the artillery corps; in short, Fueros of almost every thing. These special privileges exempted those who chose to make use of them, from the jurisdiction of the ordinary authorities, and made them amenable in civil and criminal causes, to the tribunal of the chief of that body to which they belonged. It may be readily seen that the principal sufferers by this state of things were the native Mexicans, who sought in vain for justice against a Spaniard, protected by his own race in his misdeeds, and armed with the right of appealing to one or more tribunals of those whose community of interest enlisted their feelings and judgment on his side in advance.

The municipal establishments retained some vestiges of freedom. The *Cabildos*, or municipalities of the towns, were composed of regidores and alcaldes, who were for a long time elected by the people, and who always regarded them with affection, and looked to them for protection. They were connected with the people by innumerable ties, and at the commencement of the revolution we find them becoming every where the organs of the people. It was their decided course of action, in fact, which brought matters to a crisis between the creoles and the mother country. It is very singular that this should be the case, when, for many ages before the revolution, the right of election had been every where merely nominal, the offices in some places being sold out to the highest bidders, and in others made the reward of military services, and subject to the laws of military succession and government. Thus it was not unfrequently the case that a corporal, in the absence of his superior officers, administered the laws in a town of a hundred wealthy landholders, whose only resource against the decrees of his ignorance was an appeal to an *audiencia*, a proceeding attended with the greatest trouble and expense. In such a state of affairs the administration of the laws furnished the privileged classes with a ready means of oppression and they availed themselves of it to such an extent that the "law' delay" was by no means the worst feature of a Mexican lawsuit.

Alexander VI.

THE ecclesiastical establishments in America were independent of the Pope. Alexander VI., in 1502, constituted Ferdinand II., of Spain, the effectual head of the American church, and his successors ever afterwards displayed the greatest firmness in resisting every thing like an attempt at encroachment of the Holy See upon their independent spiritual jurisdiction over the American provinces. The indulgences and dispensations were bought up by the Spanish king, and his agents at Rome, cheap, and retailed at a great profit to the subjects in the New World. The crown held the monopoly of this lucrative trade, and resisted every effort of the popes to obtain a greater share of it than they were willing to allow.

Every feature of the colonial policy of the Spaniards tended to the great end of their system, to teach all classes to look to the king, and to him alone for preferment. Another most important branch of the government was the collection of the customs and revenue, in which a host of officers was employed, under the direction of the *Intendentes*, each of whom presided over a particular district, the boundaries of which were so well defined, that they have served to regulate the number and boundaries of the states now composing the republic. The *Intendentes* held their authority from the king through the Council of the Indies, were possessed of the right to determine all questions respecting the revenues, and were wholly independent of the viceroy. The viceroy commanded the troops in person, and filled up all vacancies in the army. He was assisted in the discharge of his duties by a *Junta de Guerra*, or council of war, and a *fiscal* or legal adviser.

The theory of the government of Mexico, under the Spaniards, is much better than is generally supposed; but its practical working was nothing more than the application of the whole political power of the crown to the maintenance of a system of revenue laws, by which the interest of the colonies was entirely sacrificed to that of the mother country.

The intentions of the first framers of the laws were conciliatory towards the creoles, and the Recopilacion frequently and strongly insists upon the equality of Americans and Europeans, and makes any subject of the crown eligible to the highest dignity, not excepting that of viceroy. Yet in practice the creoles were totally excluded from any participation in the government. Every situation in the gift of the crown, from that of viceroy down to the lowest revenue officer, was bestowed upon a European, and for many years before the revolution, no instance is afforded in which the door of promotion was opened to a native, into either the church, the army, or the law. A class of men was thus disseminated throughout the country distinct from the natives in feelings, habits, and interest, who looked upon themselves as members of a privileged caste, owing all to Spain, and exclusively devoted to her. They had in their hands all the revenues of the country, and their chief study was how to rob Mexico of the greatest capital possible. They went thither to reside for a time, and they hastened to return, in order to deposit under the paternal roof the fruits of their robbery. The viceroys set a splendid example of this cupidity. With a salary fixed at sixty thousand dollars, they found means to disburse two or three times that amount yearly, and return to Spain, after some years of vice-regal life, with several millions of economical dollars. They monopolized to themselves the king's right to dispose of mercury, they sold to the creoles the right to assume empty titles, and to the merchants of Mexico and Vera Cruz the more substantial rights to import prohibited foreign articles into the country. Sometimes the viceroys shared in the profits of the contraband trade without incurring any of the risk. The good understanding always maintained between the Spaniards in the country, rendered it impossible for a Mexican to enter into competition with them in commerce, and European hands held the whole trade of the country. All functionaries, great and small, went to the greatest limits in plundering the people on one hand, and the king on the other, and the business of office holding was so good, that many lived excellently well, who received no legal compensation whatever for their services. In fact, candidates for merely honorary offices were numerous, and sometimes they paid high prices for a title which gave them the privilege of robbing Mexico.

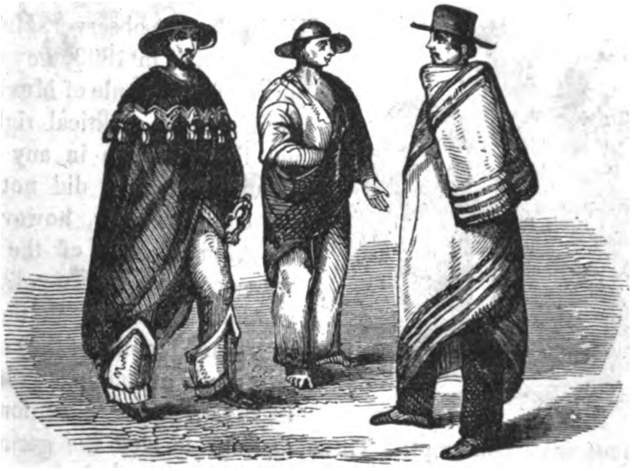
The complaints of the unfortunate people were fruitless against the combination of Spaniards. The feeling of clanship among the latter became at last a passion, to which even the natural feelings were sacrificed. The son, born of a creole mother, was considered inferior to the Castilian clerk, for whom the hand of the daughter of the family was reserved, with a large portion of the wealth; and a Spanish father, when irritated at his child's misdemeanours, would call him "creole," the formula of the most profound contempt it was possible for him to express. A proof of the extent of this evil is clearly seen in the violence of the reaction after the revolution, when the name of Spaniard entailed on its possessor a full title to every kind of proscription.

SPAIN, though vigilant in all that concerned her financial interests, suffered them to be so totally mismanaged, that from Mexico, where the official revenue was stated at twenty millions of dollars, she received only six millions annually, the rest being swallowed up in expenses in the New World. Every attempt to reform these matters was made, by adding new laws, which merely complicated the system. Meanwhile, the Mexican was kept in total ignorance, and taught to believe his own situation preferable to that of all mankind, because he belonged to a nation superior in power and dignity to the rest of the world.

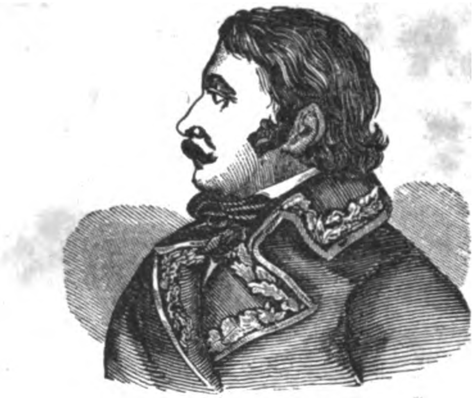
The principal causes of the Revolution, however, were the restrictions with which commerce and industry were fettered. The preference given to the Spaniards in public offices did not act directly upon the people, who seldom aspired to govern. But the monopoly, supported by the authorities of Spain and Mexico, bore heavily upon them. The full amount of the injustice was made visible to them day by day, as they were called upon to pay with an equal weight of precious metals for those European articles in general use, and above all, for those which their own countrymen would have produced so cheaply and abundantly, if they had not been prohibited. While Spain undertook to supply every market of her colonies, it is notorious that she herself produced scarcely any thing. She was in reality merely a merchant dealing out to her colonies the productions of industrious Europe, which reaped all the actual benefit resulting from the discovery of the transatlantic sources of wealth.

Such is a faint outline of the miserable system by which Spain governed all her colonies for three centuries. It was a system which could not endure long, when the power to enforce it was not retained. It is an immutable law of human affairs, that every system where the advantages are not reciprocal, where the governed do not derive benefit as well as the governors, should fall with the power which has established it. Such was the case in Mexico. The events which occurred in Europe in the beginning of the nineteenth century, developed in the minds of the Mexicans ideas of independence which had never before been popular enough to be translated even into words, but which were now speedily to develop themselves in actions. The French revolution, upturning the whole system of European despotism, diffused somewhat of its spirit into the benighted provinces of Spanish America, and caused the promulgation of sentiments among the people, which otherwise would have remained the favourite theme of a few philosophers, who might, in the silence of the closet, arrange an ideal drama of the revolution, but who would recoil in horror from the very thought of putting it into action.

It is the misfortune of the people of Mexico, that their condition under the Spaniards was such as to cut them off from all means of improvement in the political science. To the sister republic of the United States, political intelligence, and a keen foresight of coming oppression, shed a clear light upon the struggle for national independence; but in Mexico it was the instinctive resistance to intolerable oppression, borne for centuries by the country, which nerved the arm of the patriot; and when liberated from the foreign oppressor, the unfortunate Mexican was still to be subject to all the horrors of domestic military despotism, which substituted perpetual convulsions and civil feuds, for the previous dead calm of unmitigated despotism.



Mexican Gentlemen.



Hidalgo.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

THE intelligent observer, Humboldt, remarks that in 1803, the great majority of the people of Mexico were indifferent to political rights, and not likely to join in any effort to acquire them. It did not escape his close scrutiny, however, that the higher clases of the creoles were irritated by the political insignificance to which they were condemned, and that they regarded the mother country with sullen hatred, and her once formidable resources with contempt. These feelings formed the germ of the revolution, and favourable circumstances soon called them into action. At the commencement of 1808, the government of Mexico was intrusted to Don Jose Iturrigaray, and the vice regal authority seemed to be as firmly established as at any former period. The country was tranquil, the people were occupied in their regular pursuits, and there could be detected nothing in the general calm to indicate the approaching tempest.

The agitation commenced on the receipt of the news of the overthrow of the king of Spain by the Emperor Napoleon. The viceroy communicated the intelligence to the government gazette; but singularly enough added no comments to it concerning his future movements. In a few days, however, he became convinced of the error he had committed in not giving a direction to men's thoughts upon such startling information. He attempted to remedy it by a proclamation, soliciting the support of the people, and announcing his determination to preserve, in all emergencies, his fidelity to his and their sovereign. The people received his publication with acclamations, rejoicing greatly in the fact that they had been considered more than ciphers for once, than in the viceroy's loyalty. A kindly feeling sprung up between Iturrigaray and the people, who poured in upon him from every quarter, through their ayuntamientos, the most loyal addresses. A new feeling had been awakened, however, which very soon displayed itself. The ayuntamiento of the capital proposed the creation of a junta, in imitation of the mother country, and the convocation of a national Mexican assembly, composed of deputies from the different provinces.

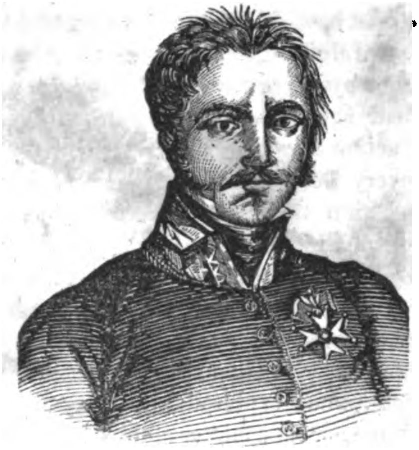
The viceroy was not inimical to the proposition, but the Audiencia protested against it as opposed both to the privileges of the crown and of the Europeans, and the dispute between that body and the governor ran high, it was finally ended by a band of Europeans in the service of the Audiencia, who surprised the viceroy in his palace in the night, September 15th, and carried him to prison. The Audiencia justified the measure by proclaiming Iturrigaray to the lower classes as a *heretic*, and formed juntas of public security, and organized armed bands of Spaniards, who under the curious title of patriots, watched zealously the conduct of all who were suspected of being favourable to the imprisoned viceroy. Many persons were arrested, and banished or imprisoned, and the vice-regal authority was confided for the time to the archbishop Lizana. The moderate disposition of this prelate, however, did not suit the fiercer tempers of his coadjutors, and he was replaced in 1809, by the Audiencia, to whom the supreme authority was confided by the central junta of Spain. The feeling of opposition was spreading throughout the country rapidly, and the arrogance and violence of the Audiencia soon brought matters to a crisis. Its character may be fairly estimated from that of one of its principal members, the oidor Bataller, who was wont to say that "while a Manchego mule, or a Castilian cobbler remained in the peninsula, he had a right to govern the Americans." Every where a most impatient desire to shake off the Spanish yoke began to be manifested, and the authorities in vain attempted to check the insurrectionary movements by arresting all who could be detected in concerting them. When suppressed at one point, the discontent broke out with additional violence at another; the scene of the difficulty only was changed.. At length, in the province of Guanaxuato, the cura, Hidalgo, roused his countrymen into action.

Don Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla was a man of very superior acquirements. His reading was extensive, the town of Dolores, of which he was the cura, exhibited many proofs of his activity and intelligence in the manufactures of the parishioners, and the culture of the silkworm, which he had encouraged and introduced. He had planted vineyards of a great extent in the neighbourhood of the town, and thereby increased the resources of his curacy, but an order from the capital destroyed the results of his labours, and threw his people into great distress. Thus private injury was added to his sense of public wrong, and perhaps added to the stern inexorable spirit in which he waged the contest with the equally stubborn and unrelenting Spaniards, and which stamped upon the revolution in the very onset a sanguinary character which it maintained throughout. He proceeded in his movement with little caution, and the government had formed a plan to crush his intended revolt at once, by arresting him and his principal associates. This merely hastened the execution of his scheme, and they commenced the revolution with Allende, and ten of his parishioners, on the 16th of September, 1810. On that day he seized and imprisoned seven Europeans, resident in the town of Dolores, and distributed their property among his followers. The flame thus lighted spread through the country, according to the Spanish accounts, with the rapidity of the atmospheric plague.

IN twenty-four hours the number of his partisans had become so numerous that he was enabled, on the 17th of September, to take possession of San Felipe, and on the 18th, of San Miguel el Grande, towns of ten thousand inhabitants each. In both places the confiscated property of the Spaniards gave him the means of still further increasing his force. A determination to rise against the established order of things was every where manifested; men, unconnected with politics, landowners, resident upon their estates in the most remote provinces, curas, whose lives had been passed in the midst of their parishioners, and young men educated for the law or the church, and just emerging from the university, all flew to arms, and embarked at once in a contest for which they were supposed to be wholly unprepared. Hidalgo next took Guanaxuato, and stormed the public granary, in which the intendant had fortified himself. Here was captured a treasure worth nearly five millions of dollars, consisting of the gold, silver, mercury, and valuables of the royal treasury, and all the personal riches of the Spaniards, who had shut themselves up with the intendant. The Indians, after the action was over, behaved with the utmost cruelty, putting to death every European that fell into their hands. On the morning after the action, there was not a single house left standing that had belonged to a European. Hidalgo made no attempt to restrain them, either because he desired to have them commit themselves beyond the possibility of pardon, or because he was powerless to restrain the first outbreaks of a ferocity which had lain so long dormant. During his stay at Guanaxuato he established a mint, and cast the bells, which he had captured, into cannon. The treasures he had taken made his movement a matter of dread to the royalists, and his standard a rallying point for all adventurers and revolutionary partisans. Two days before the insurrection in Dolores, a new viceroy, Don Francisco Xavier Venegas, had been installed. He was a man of great abilities, and the measures he took to put down Hidalgo's movements were well calculated to effect that object. On the 10th of October, the revolutionary chief moved from Guadalaxara, and captured Valladolid. On the 19th he left that city, and on the 28th, with fifty thousand men, reached Toluca, a town within twelve leagues of the capital. Venegas had assembled a force of seven thousand men, which he disposed of in the most advantageous manner for the defence of the town. A corps of observation was stationed on the Toluca road, under the command of Colonel Truxillo, assisted by Don Augustin Iturbide, then a lieutenant in the Mexican service.

Hidalgo defeated this corps on the 30th of October, at Las Cruces, and it was expected that he would immediately advance upon the capital; but, for various reasons, he thought proper to retreat. His Indians were totally undisciplined, and since he had seen them cut down by hundreds at Las Cruces, in the sage endeavour to stop the cannons' mouths of the enemy with their straw hats, he had no hope of their being able to face for a moment the batteries which, he was well aware, Venegas would raise for the support of the capital. His whole army was but an undisciplined rabble; ammunition was very scarce, and Calleja, who was leading a body of troops against him from San Luis Potosi, was daily expected to fall upon his rear.

Hidalgo soon fell in with the advanced guard of Calleja's army, and both parties prepared for the battle, in the plains of Aculco, November 7th, 1810. Calleja was extremely anxious about the result of this meeting, as the greater part of his army was composed of



Calleja.

creole regiments, who, he feared, would fraternize with their opponents. Such would probably have been the case had it not been for the disorderly manner in which the followers of Hidalgo dispersed, in the very beginning of hostile movements, and commenced firing at random against all who came within their reach. This exasperated the creoles, who now pressed eagerly forward, and speedily decided the fate of the day. From this time until 1821, the creoles were the chief support of the Spanish power, and the inveterate enemies of the insurgents. Had the soldiers of Hidalgo been at all disciplined, or the conduct and measures of Calleja less mollifying and skilful, the creoles would have embraced the other side of the question, and the war of independence would have been ended at once. Escaping with his general officers from the bloody field of Aculco, Hidalgo collected as many of the fugitives as he could, and retreated to Valladolid. Allende, his second in command, retreated on Guanaxuato, whither he was pursued by Calleja. He immediately evacuated the place, when the people flew to the fort, in which Hidalgo had formerly left two hundred and forty-nine Europeans as prisoners, and massacred them all. The blood had not ceased to flow from their dead bodies, ere Calleja was at the gate, and he commenced the work of retaliation by ordering his troops to give no quarter. This order was countermanded after many were slain, and a sentence of decimation was pronounced against a part of the population. Hidalgo arrived at Valladolid on the 14th of November, and allowed his followers some days of repose. Here he was joined by the advocate, Don Ignacio Lopez Rayon, whom he appointed his confidential secretary, and who afterwards took an active part in the revolution.

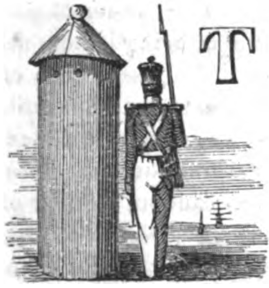
by establishing the Junta of Zitacuaro, the first step towards creating an independent government, and one which systematized the revolution, and gave a character of respectability to the patriot cause which it had not before possessed.

On the 24th of November, Hidalgo made a public entry into Guadalaxara, where he was soon after joined by Allende. He procured a number of cannons from San Blas, on the western coast, and though he had only twelve hundred muskets in the army, he determined to risk a battle, hoping that he would command success by his artillery. Before the battle, however, he committed deeds of cruelty which have stamped his name with an immortality of infamy. All the Europeans in Guadalaxara had been thrown into prison on his arrival there, and the number was so great that it was necessary to distribute them among the different convents. On a pretended suspicion of a conspiracy among them, he caused them to be taken out at night to the retired part of the mountains near the city, where they were butchered in cold blood by the general's creatures. He had caused eighty Spaniards to be beheaded while he was at Valladolid, but at Guadalaxara the number amounted to between seven and eight hundred.

CALLEJA at length marched to the north, and on the 16th of January, 1811, arrived at the bridge of Calderon, sixteen leagues from Guadalaxara, where the insurgents were fortified, awaiting his approach. On the 17th a battle was fought, which terminated like that of Aculco. The Mexicans repulsed two or three attacks, in one of which the creole regiments lost their able commander, the Conde de la Cadena; but the explosion of an ammunition wagon threw Hidalgo's ranks into disorder, and the fate of the day was soon decided. His troops had fought much better than before, however, and their loss was much less. He retreated with Allende in an orderly manner, while Rayon went back to Guadalaxara to carry off the military chest, which contained three hundred thousand dollars. They all met again at Saltillo. There it was decided that Hidalgo, Allende, Aldama, and Abasalo, should proceed to the United States to purchase arms and military stores. They were captured on the road, on the 21st of March, 1811, by the treachery of a former associate, and after a long trial, protracted to obtain from them all possible information, they were all shot. They met death with firmness.

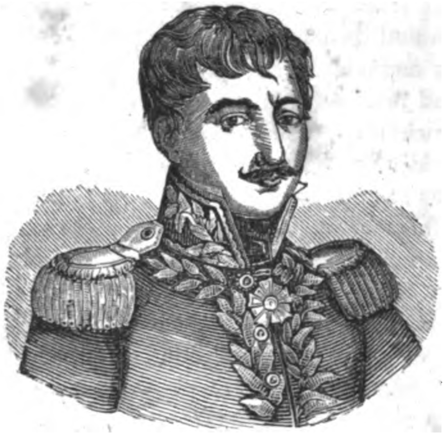
We have been thus particular with the account of Hidalgo's rise and fall, as the opening scene of the revolutionary drama, and because it shows the general character of the war. A guerilla warfare now succeeded under Rayon, Muniz, Navarrete, Serrano, Osorno, and others. Although the authority of the viceroy was acknowledged in the principal towns, the partisans were so numerous that the communication between them was unsafe, and the sentinels were lassoed at the very gates; the country was devastated, and hardly a day passed without some hostile action. Under Rayon's auspices, a central junta was established 10th September, 1811.

AT Valladolid, when Hidalgo was on his march towards the city of Mexico, his army was joined by Don Jose Maria Morelos, cura of Nucupetaro, to whom Hidalgo immediately gave a commission to command in chief on the whole south-western line of coast. He accepted the commission, and set out October 10th, with five followers, armed with six old muskets. His confidence in his own resources was not misplaced. By the end of November he was at the head of a thousand men, whom he laboured diligently to discipline, although he was greatly in want of arms. On the night of the 25th of January, 1811, he surprised the camp of the royalist captain, Don Francisco Paris, who commanded a numerous and well-appointed body of troops. He gained a complete victory, capturing eight hundred muskets, five pieces of artillery, a large quantity of ammunition, a considerable amount of money, and seven hundred prisoners, all of whom he treated with the greatest humanity. From this moment his progress was astonishing, and the skill with which he baffled the efforts of the divisions sent against him, soon made him the terror of the Spaniards, and the admiration of his countrymen. Jose and Antonio and Ermenegildo Galeana, the cura Matamoros, the three Bravos, and Victoria, all men of character and eminence, fought under his banner with great gallantry. The year 1811 passed in continual warfare, by which his renown so increased that Calleja marched against him with an army flushed with victory in the campaign against Hidalgo. Morelos made a stand at Cuautla Amilipas, an entirely open town, twenty-two leagues from the capital. Calleja, on his way to Cuautla, drove the junta out of the town of Zitacuaro, and destroyed the place. This town was well fortified, and their success in taking it inspired the royalist troops with contempt for the town of Cuautla and its defenders, and when the signal for the attack was given, they marched forward in four columns, confiding in their invincibility, and resolved to make short work of the fighting. The silence with which their approach was awaited, however, was ominous, and when Morelos, having suffered them to get within a hundred yards of his intrenchments in the plaza, opened a well-directed fire upon them, he threw them into confusion, and caused their speedy retreat. Calleja maintained the action from seven in the morning till three in the afternoon, when, after an unsuccessful attempt to draw the patriots forth by pretending to abandon his cannon, he retired to a town one league distant, leaving five hundred dead upon the field. He sent immediately to the capital for supplies of artillery, ammunition, and men. All that the magazines contained were furnished to him, and General Llano was ordered by the viceroy to join him with his whole force. Morelos, conscious that the eyes of all Mexico were turned to Cuautla, resolved to maintain it, though it was not at all defensible, according to the rules of warfare. He had a very small stock of provisions, and but little ammunition. The latter circumstance he remedied in part by economy in powder, and by buying from the people the balls, thrown into the town, at a fixed price per dozen; but the want of food terminated the siege much sooner than it would have ended otherwise. Calleja continually bombarded him from one side, and Llano from the other; yet his men defended themselves without a symptom of faltering, enduring every suffering, with the same undaunted resolution displayed by their officers.



THE siege commmenced about the 1st of March, and at the end of April, all the advantages that had been gained were on the side of the besieged. Famine, however, was making great havoc among them. Nearly three hundred were sick in one hospital alone. A cat sold for six dollars, a lizard for two, and a dollar was cheerfully paid for a rat. A general action was brought on, one day, by a cow, which happened to stray into the space between the enemy's quarters and the town. The temptation to seize her was too great for the starving soldiers, and Morelos had great difficulty with nearly his whole remaining force in saving them from destruction.

Morelos at last determined to evacuate the place, and the skill with which he did so was not surpassed by the bravery that had so long defended it. Every preparation was made beforehand. On



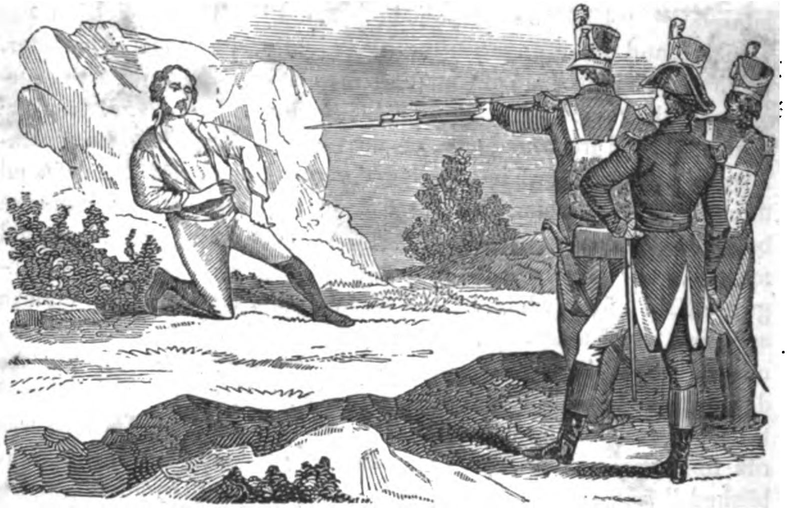
Leonardo Bravo.

the night of the 2d of May, between eleven and twelve o'clock, the troops were formed in the plaza. Galeana took command of the advanced guard, Morelos the centre, and the Bravos of the rear. The column moved so noiselessly that they passed unperceived between the enemy's batteries; and they were not discovered until they were putting together a bridge of hurdles, which the Indians had carried with them for the purpose of crossing a deep ravine that lay in the way. The ravine was hardly crossed when they were attacked on opposite sides by the troops of Llano and Calleja. Morelos immediately gave the signal for a general dispersion, which was so ably effected, that the Spanish troops fired for some time upon each other in mistake. Morelos marched to Izucar, then under Miguel Bravo, and here in two days he had the pleasure of being joined, according to agreement, by his dispersed soldiers. Only seventeen of all the garrison were missing. Among them, however, was Leonardo Bravo, who was taken by the enemy. His loss was deeply regretted.

Calleja did not march into the town, till several hours after Morelos had left it; and even then with ridiculous caution, for fear of some new stratagem. When he found the town abandoned to him, he exercised the most atrocious cruelties upon the unoffending inhabitants. He returned to the capital on the 16th of May, giving a pompous account of his success, at which every one laughed. The popular appreciation of his success was well expressed by a character in a new comedy brought out at the time, at a theatre in the capital. A soldier was introduced, who came before his general and presented him with a turban, saying, in a most pompous manner, "Here is the turban of the Moor, whom I took prisoner." "And the Moor himself?" "Unfortunately, sir, he escaped." The application was palpable, and the passage was received nightly with shouts of laughter.

Thus ended the siege of Cuautla, the most important military occurrence of the revolution. As soon as Morelos had recovered from the effects of a fall from his horse, on the night of the retreat, he recommenced his career with more decided success than ever. He defeated three Spanish divisions, captured nine cannons, and an immense booty in Orizaba, stormed Oaxaca in the most daring and successful manner, and reduced Acapulco, after a siege of seven months, August, 1813. Meanwhile, he had summoned a meeting of a Mexican congress, which assembled at Chilpanzingo, in the province of Oaxaca, on the 13th of September, 1813. Its most remarkable act was the declaration of the absolute independence of Mexico. This seemed to be the culminating point of the glory of Morelos. "My race was run from the moment that I saw an independent government established," said he, at a later period, and the remark is borne out by the fact, that from that time commenced a series of reverses which only terminated with his life.

His first defeat was occasioned by the valour of Iturbide, and the error of a large body of insurgent cavalry, who came upon the battlefield in the midst of a fight, and mistook their friends for their foes, causing irretrievable confusion. He was again defeated by Colonel Iturbide, at Puruaran, January 6, 1814. In this battle, his brave lieutenant, Matamoros, was taken prisoner and shot. The insurgents retaliated upon their prisoners. One after another of the conquests of the gallant general were retaken, and action after action was lost, his officers were taken by the enemy, and executed, and the congress was driven from Chilpanzingo to the woods of Apatzingan, where, October 22, 1814, it adopted the constitution known by that name. Here, in the early part of the following year, Iturbide very nearly succeeded in surprising the congress, by a masterly forced march. With a view of placing it in safety, Morelos undertook to escort it to Tehuacan, in La Puebla, a march of sixty leagues, across a part of the country filled with royalist troops. He had only five hundred men under his command; but Teran commanded a large body of insurgents in La Puebla, and if he could join them, all might be well again. His despatches, however, were intercepted, and he was surprised, when he fancied himself beyond the reach of the enemy's lines, by two parties of royalists, who came upon him unperceived, in a mountainous part of the road. He took no measures to save himself. Don Nicolas Bravo was ordered to continue the march with the main body of the troops as an escort for the congress, while he endeavoured, with a few men, to check the advance of the Spaniards.



Death of Morelos.

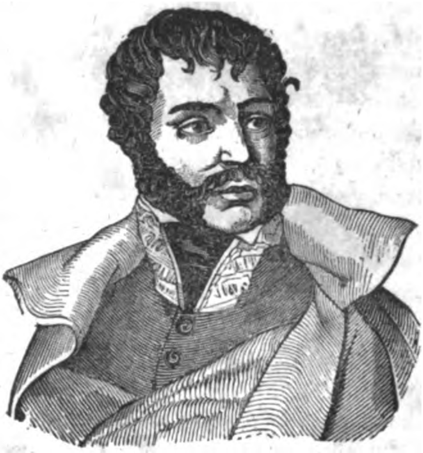
Most of his guard abandoned him when the action became hot; yet his desire to gain time was gratified, for the royalists did not advance to seize him until one man only was left at his side. He was at first treated with great indignity, afterwards with more kindness, and finally shot, giving the signal himself, with the same composure he had ever evinced on the field of battle, December 22, 1815. The prayer he uttered, just before his execution, is laconic and extremely affecting. "Lord, if I have done well, thou knowest it; if ill, to thy infinite mercy I commend my soul."

His friend, Don Leonardo Bravo, had suffered the same fate in 1814, an occurrence which caused the most noble exhibition of magnanimity known in Mexican history. The son of the condemned officer, Don Nicolas Bravo, gained the first victory of the Palmar, after a very severe three days' fight, August 20. He took on this occasion three hundred prisoners, whom he offered to the viceroy, Venegas, in exchange for his father. The offer was refused, and Leonardo Bravo was ordered to be immediately executed. It would have been in accordance with the spirit of the war to retaliate; but Don Nicolas, as noble as he was brave, instantly set all his prisoners at liberty, "wishing," as he said, "to put it out of his own power to avenge on them the death of his parent, lest in the first moment of grief, the temptation should prove irresistible."

Don Nicolas Bravo greatly added to his military reputation in the following campaign, by sustaining a siege for two months, on the Cerro of Coscomatepec, and a masterly retreat when provisions utterly failed him, without the loss of a man. During the same year, October 18, 1813, Matamoros cut off the celebrated regiment of the Asturias, "the victors of the victors of Austerlitz," after a severe action of eight hours. But these successes weighed little against the current of disaster before noticed, and the active and enterprising Calleja, who had succeeded Venegas as viceroy, March 4, 1813, destroyed successively the armies of the insurgent chiefs.

Teran dissolved the Congress, and thus destroyed the only bond of union that existed among them, other than their common devotion to the same cause. Notwithstanding all the advantages that had been gained in the field, however, little had been done by the viceroy towards destroying the seeds of the rebellion. Cruel and bloodthirsty though Calleja was, he was nevertheless an able politician, and knew well the truth of what he said when he wrote to the king, that "as six millions of inhabitants, decided in the cause of independence, have no need of previous consultation, each one acts, according to his means and opportunities, in favour of the project common to all; the judge, by concealing or conniving at crimes; the clergy, by advocating the justice of the cause in the confessional, and even in the pulpit; the writers, by corrupting public opinion; the women, by employing their attractions in order to seduce the royal troops; the government officer, by revealing, and thus paralyzing, the plans of his superiors; the youth, by taking arms; the old man, by giving intelligence and forwarding correspondence; and the public corporations, by setting an example of public differences with the Europeans, not one of whom they will admit as a colleague."

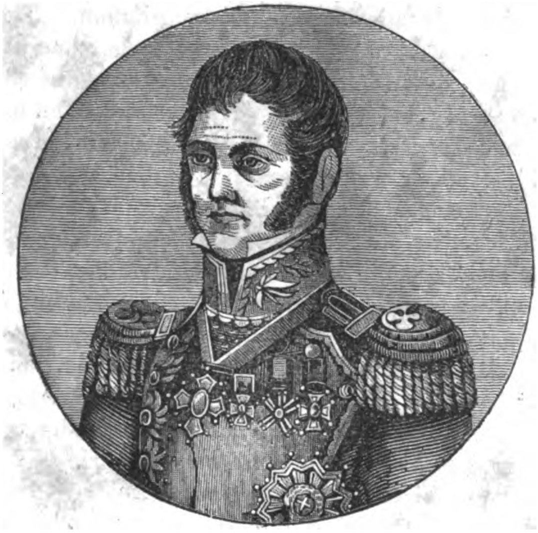
The constitution adopted for Spain by the Cortes, in 1812, was also applied to Mexico and the other colonies. The legal restrictions upon the authority of the viceroy in this instrument were dispensed with; and, backed by an imposing force, Calleja laboured zealously to restore quiet. When he was succeeded in the government, in 1816, by Apodaca, the country was generally tranquil, and the new viceroy being a man of much more mildness of character, hoped to allay the whole disaffection. During the first two years of his rule, seventeen thousand of the insurgents accepted the *indulto*, or pardon offered by the king. Although the most important articles of the new constitution had been almost immediately suspended, it so far developed the spirit of independence that nothing could afterwards shake its hold upon the minds of the people. Out of six hundred and fifty-two elective appointments for which it provided, not one was given to a European, and the greater part were filled by avowed republicans, who were best fitted to judge leniently of the guilt of their companions, should the latter be brought under their jurisdic-



Mina.

tion as alcaldes, for disloyalty. These were the officers to whom Calleja so bitterly alludes in the extract just quoted; but his successor did not so well understand the deceitful character of the apparent calm. He saw the celebrated guerilla chief, Mina, land in the country with a respectable force, and summon others to his standard, but he found that the great mass of the people remained spectators of his movements. Mina enacted his part of soldier well, but the superior power of the viceroy soon crushed his opposition, destroyed his army, and captured him. He was tried, condemned, and executed on the 11th of November, 1817. Those who still held the strongholds he had captured were successively conquered, as well as the independent Mexican chiefs; and in 1819, not one of all the insurgent leaders remained, except Guerrera, whose handful of wanderers was hardly thought worth the trouble of capture. The viceroy, therefore, wrote confidently to Spain that he would answer for the safety of Mexico without a single additional soldier being sent out, the province being again tranquil and perfectly submissive to the royal authority.

Ere long he learned his error. Mina, not more skilful as a soldier than he was ignorant as a politician, was a royalist, convinced that the independent party could never succeed in Mexico, and therefore unable to act upon its adherents: he was a Spaniard, whose national feelings prevented him from fraternizing with the natives; he committed in the commencement of his career the fatal error of seizing the money and property of a creole nobleman, who had taken no part in the war, and who was one of those for whose defence he professed

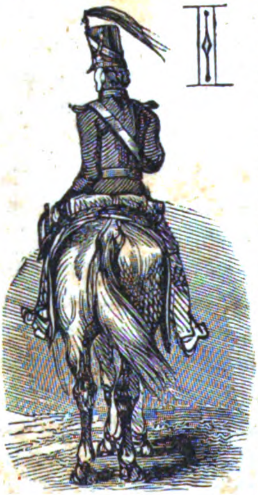


Iturbide.

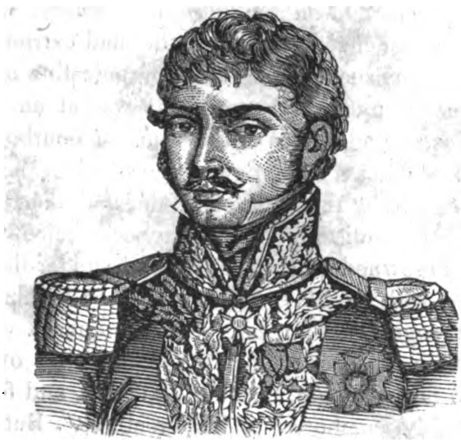
to have come. He had been expelled from Spain in consequence of an attempt to create an insurrection in favour of the Cortes, after the dissolution of that assembly by the king, and he came to Mexico to fight in the same cause, the constitutional freedom of the country under the Spanish king, which was not what the insurgents wanted. All the leaders of that party who united with him were men with whom it was a disgrace to be associated.

During the war, the creole troops had proved the main stay of the government, a circumstance the more remarkable as no creole was allowed to hold any important command. The leisure of peace gave them an opportunity of thinking over their course, and they soon saw the great error they had committed. Crowds of insurgents, who had taken the benefit of the indulto, were allowed to mingle with their soldiers, and many of them were admitted into their ranks as recruits. These spread their opinions with zeal. They taught their new comrades that it was to them the country had a right to look for freedom, while they alone had prevented its acquirement, and under a mistaken notion of honour, committed an error which it was now their duty to repair. As these convictions began to influence the minds of the creole soldiers, the constitution of 1812 was re-established in Spain, and of course in Mexico. The election returns in 1820 were of the same character as in 1812, and the partisans derived an additional advantage from this change in the government, by the division among the Spaniards, some of whom were royalists of the old school, and others sincerely attached to the constitution. The viceroy, Apodaca, took the oath to the constitution, at the same time intending to overturn it, in alliance with the dignitaries of the church.

Don Augustin de Iturbide was the person selected to carry this design into execution. He was of a respectable family of the province of Valladolid, serving as a lieutenant in a regiment of provincial militia, at the commencement of the revolution. He was possessed of a fine person, captivating address, and polished manners, as well as a daring and ambitious spirit. He dipped early into the schemes of the insurgents, who would gladly have received him into their ranks had he not rated his services far above what they conceived them to be worth. He was young, and inexperienced then, and their refusal to accede to his terms determined him to embrace the cause of the government, for which, as we have seen, he fought with bravery, activity, and almost uniform success. He stained his victories by the most unlicensed severities. After a victory at Salvatierra, for instance, he writes to the viceroy on Good Friday, 1814, that in honour of the day, he had just ordered three hundred excommunicated wretches to be shot. He was further charged with rapacity and extortions in his government, a fault shared, however, by all his fellow officers.



IN 1820, he was despatched by Apodaca to take command of a small body of troops on the western coast, at the head of which he was to proclaim the re-establishment of absolute royal authority. He accepted the commission, and proceeded at once to execute a plan of his own for bringing the creole troops to unite with the insurgents and shake off the Spanish yoke altogether. At the head of eight hundred men he proclaimed the famous Plan of Iguala, February 24th, 1821, at the town of that name, on the road from Mexico to Acapulco. It was intended to conciliate all parties. The independence of Mexico was to be established, and its union with Spain preserved by vesting the right to the crown in the king of Spain or one of his brothers. Spaniards were put upon the same footing with the creoles, and an end put to the despotism of military commandants. He proposed three great objects to be kept in view, which he called "the three Guarantees," and his army was denominated "the army of the three Guarantees." These guarantees were independence, the maintenance of the Ca-

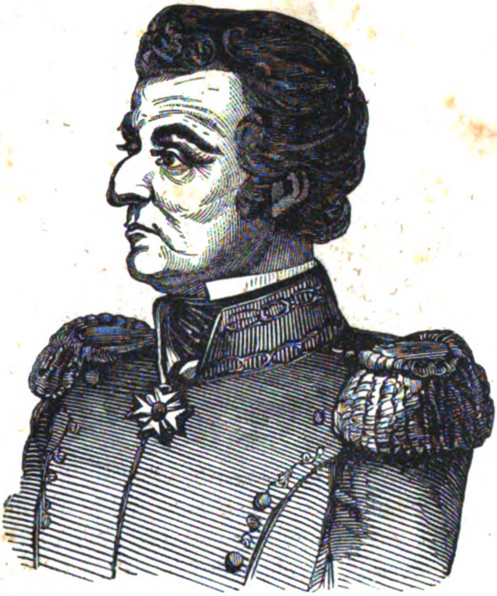


Novella.

tholic religion, and union. The viceroy might have speedily overturned the little army of the three guarantees, but he seemed so surprised at the course taken by his subordinate, that he hesitated to put himself at the head of the troops of the capital until the Europeans became alarmed and deposed him. They elected in his place Don Francisco Novella, but his authority was not generally recognized, and Iturbide profited by the schism in the capital to consummate his plans in the interior. In the first place he seized a conducta with a million of dollars. Guerrera was then induced to join him in the new war for "independence." Insurgents and creoles joined together under his authority, the clergy openly espoused his cause, and protestations of good will from the most distant provinces poured in upon him. Before November, the whole country acknowledged his authority, except the capital in which Novella had shut himself up with the Spanish troops. Iturbide was about to invest it, when he heard of the landing at Vera Cruz, of Don Juan O'Donoju, the new constitutional viceroy and political chief, whom Iturbide hastened to meet at Cordova, and adopted with him by treaty, the Plan of Iguala, as the only means of securing the lives and property of the Spaniards in Mexico, and the right to the throne to the house of Bourbon. Novella left the country with those who chose to follow him, and O'Donoju remained there as a member of the junta, which was to exercise the supreme authority until the king's decision, with regard to the treaty, should be known. This junta chose a regency of five individuals, of which Iturbide was made president. He was at the same time created generalissimo, and lord high admiral, with a yearly salary of a hundred and twenty thousand dollars. The first

Mexican Cortes assembled on the 24th of February, 1822, and the fall of Iturbide commenced. Hitherto he had carried the nation along with him, but as soon as the future organization of the government came under discussion, the unanimity was at an end. There were three parties, the adherents of the house of Bourbon, the republicans, and the Iturbidists. The news soon came of the rejection of the treaty of Cordova, by the king of Spain, and the Bourbon party died away. The Iturbidists immediately raised their favourite to the throne. He was crowned emperor of Mexico, under the title of Augustin I. on the 18th of May, 1822. This only delayed his fall. The congress recognized him, but began to quarrel with him, and after trying in vain to establish a despotic authority over them, he boldly dissolved the assembly, October 30, 1822, and formed a new legislative assembly, composed of his creatures. But he was not able to reconcile his companions in arms to these changes, and several generals pronounced against him, and prepared for a contest. He found the storm likely to prove too severe for resistance, and he therefore called together the old congress, and abdicated in March, 1823. They refused to accept his abdication, as that would imply his having had a right to the crown, but they allowed him to leave the country with his family, and allowed him a yearly income of twenty-five thousand dollars for his support.

A new executive was immediately appointed by the congress, composed of Generals Victoria, Bravo, and Negrete, by whom the affairs of the country were conducted until the assembling of a new congress, in August, 1823, which definitely sanctioned a federal constitution in October, 1824. The revolution was ended.

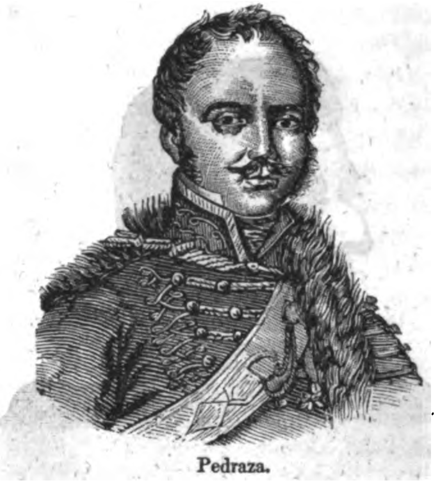


General Bustamente.

CHAPTER VIII.

HISTORY OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC.

GENERAL VICTORIA was the first president of the republic, and during the first months of his administration the parties of the nation were occupied in forming themselves. Pronunciamientos were very frequent, but they gave little alarm to the government, which proceeded steadily in a manner gratifying to the republicans. At length two parties became well defined, one opposed to republicanism, the other strongly in favour of it. The first was known by the name of the Escoceses, or Scotch party; the other by that of Yorkinos, or York party. In December, 1827,

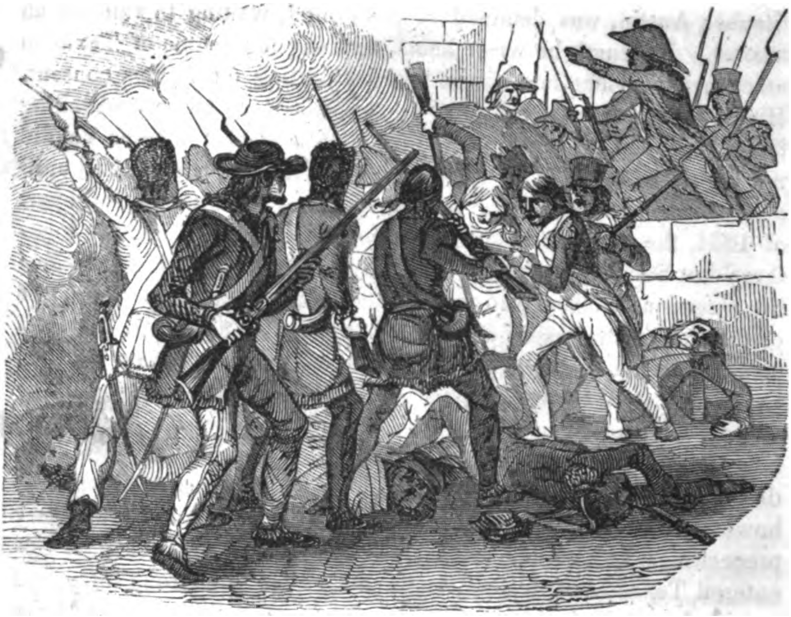


Pedraza.

General Bravo rose against the government, at the head of the Scotch party, but the president defeated and captured him, and his eminent services in the revolution alone saved his life; as it was, he was banished. In the election which soon followed, however, the Scotch faction elected their candidate, Gomez Pedraza, by a majority of two votes, but the republicans could not submit to their defeat, and Santa Anna marched against the new president, even before he was inaugurated. On the 4th of December, 1828, a pronunciamento was issued in favour of Guerrero, the president's political opponent. Pedraza fled to the United States, and congress elevated Guerrero and Bustamente to the offices of president and vice-president. The new government was immediately overturned by the latter, who induced Santa Anna to join him, overthrew Guerrero, and seized the government. The brave Guerrero, who had maintained the cause of Mexican liberty when every other champion had been slain or subdued, and whose virtues merited the lasting gratitude of his countrymen, was now rewarded by being executed, in 1831. In the following year, Santa Anna took up arms against Bustamente, and forced him to permit the recall of Pedraza, who returned from exile, resumed his office, and served out the remainder of it. When his term expired, in May, 1833, Santa Anna was elected to succeed him.

The energy of character and military skill of Santa Anna were well known, and dreaded by his rivals, yet this did not prevent them from perpetual disturbances. He kept them down with a strong hand, however, always marching to certain victory at the head of his idolizing soldiers. In 1833 the people of Texas applied for admission into the Mexican Union as a separate state, but their commissioner, Stephen Austin, was detained at the capital, waiting in vain for an answer. At length he wrote home, advising the people of Texas to erect their province into a state without waiting for further consent. His letter was intercepted, and he was seized as he was travelling homeward, and thrown into a dungeon. For nine months he did not know the cause of his imprisonment. He was not released until a year had elapsed from the time of his arrest. During the early part of 1834, the president and the congress worked harmoniously together; but Santa Anna had abandoned his republican principles since his accession to office, and was now anxious to centralize the power of the state, with himself at the head of it. He corrupted the congress, and then abolished it, taking the supreme power into his own hands, and with the army crushing all attempts at resistance. The plan of Toluca was at length published, by a new congress, in the interest of Santa Anna, which reduced the country to a military despotism, with himself at its head. In the northern departments, however, the federalists maintained a stand against these arbitrary proceedings, and a force was sent to put them down. General Cos entered Texas in September, 1835, at the head of a strong force, and prepared to enforce the requisitions of the government. A battle was fought on the banks of the Rio Guadalupe, in which a part of his force was defeated. In October, the Texans captured the fortress of Goliad, with a large quantity of arms and military stores. In the latter end of October, the Texans, under General Austin, laid siege to the strong town of Bexar. During the siege, Colonels Fannin and Bowie, with ninety-two men, gained a brilliant victory over a body of four hundred Mexicans, and on the 8th of November another victory was obtained over a party of the besieged, who henceforth kept themselves closely in the town. General Austin was without cannon suitable for the reduction of so large a city, but he stormed it on the 5th of December. General Cos retired with the garrison into the fortress of the Alamo, and kept up a constant fire upon the town, but he was obliged at length to capitulate

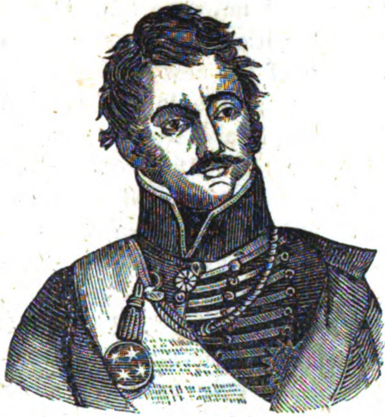
The defeat of General Cos hastened the preparations of Santa Anna to add to his glory by reducing the rebellious Texans. He entered that state with an army of ten thousand men, and a large train of artillery, and reached the town of Bexar on the 21st of February. The Texan garrison had no intimation of his approach, and they were driven into the Alamo without provisions. They received no other aid, during the siege which followed, than a reinforcement of thirty-two men from Gonzales. They numbered with these a hundred and fifty. For ten days the air was darkened by the shot and shells poured into the fort by Santa Anna, yet not a man of



Fall of the Alamo.

the Texans had fallen, while the ground was strewed with hundreds of their enemies, slain by the ball of the unerring rifle. At length, on the night of the 5th of March, they beheld the enemy advancing to assault the place. With their artillery the gallant defenders beat whole battalions to the earth, yet the Mexican pushed on his men, confident of ultimate success. The scaling-ladders were at length planted, and the Mexicans poured into the fortress. The men of the garrison, looking more like spectres than men, still dealt death upon the enemy. They sold their lives dearly, but the immense numbers of their assailants made their destruction certain. Seven of them, finding their companions all dead, asked for quarter, but were refused. They retired to a corner of the fortress, placed their backs to the walls, and fell, each upon a pile of his fallen foes. Such was the victory of the Alamo, the Thermopylæ of Texas, which cost the victor fifteen hundred of his bravest men. He now attempted to reduce the Texans by negotiation, but his overtures were disdainfully rejected.

In March, Colonel Fannin, with three hundred men, was surrounded on an open plain by a great number of the enemy, to whom he surrendered, after a short conflict, on condition of being well treated, and sent to the United States as soon as transportation could be procured. A party of a hundred men, coming to his aid, was



General Cos.

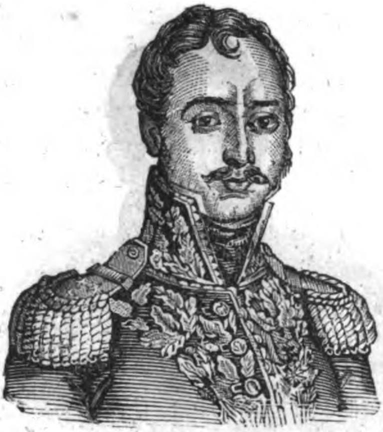
also captured, and the whole four hundred were marched to Goliad, where, after enduring every insult and indignity, Santa Anna caused them to be massacred in cold blood.

On the 2d of March, 1836, the representatives of the people of Texas assembled at Washington, and declared their state independent. The invading army was now marching in three divisions through the country, the second, under Santa Anna, being in the centre. General Houston, after retreating before one party of the foe, made a forced march to encounter Santa Anna. On the 20th of April, he bivouacked on the San Jacinto, and his troops, who had eaten nothing for forty-eight hours, began to prepare some cattle for a meal, when the advance of Santa Anna's party came up. A skirmish immediately took place, in which the too fiery Texans were driven back, and the troops of Santa Anna, already believing themselves invincible, were assured of further glory to be gained by them on the morrow. General Cos joined his commander, with the rear-guard, making his force up to fifteen hundred men, and on the afternoon of the 21st, the battle was fought. Houston had seven hundred infantry and sixty-one cavalry. The Texan infantry charged the line of the enemy till within a few yards, when they delivered their fire with dreadful effect, shouted their war cry, "Remember the Alamo," and rushed upon the foe with the bayonet. The battle was decided at once. The Mexicans lost six hundred and thirty killed, two hundred and eighty wounded, and seven hundred and thirty prisoners. Almonte was captured on the day of the battle, Santa Anna on the 22d, and General Cos on the 24th. Santa Anna now offered his services to put an end to the war; and, as president of Mexico, signed a treaty on the 14th of May, 1836, binding himself solemnly to acknowledge, sanction, and ratify the full, entire, and perfect independence of Texas. The Rio Grande was, by this treaty, defined to be the western boundary of the new republic. The Texans agreed to spare the lives of their captives, to send Santa Anna to Vera Cruz as soon as possible, and to furnish General Filisola with supplies, on his retreat out of the country. Afterwards Santa Anna was placed on board a vessel at Velasco, and hoped to be allowed to sail to Vera Cruz, but he was disappointed, as General Green arrived off the Brazos with a detachment of newly enlisted troops, and the captive general was obliged to come on shore and exhibit himself. He was sent to the United States in December, 1836, and visited the president. The United States brig Pioneer conveyed him to Mexico in 1837.

Santa Anna returned to Mexico in 1837, and retired into solitude at his hacienda of Magno de Clava. The vice-president, Barragan, had endeavoured to act upon his principles during his absence, but the policy of Santa Anna could only be upheld by his own hands; the innumerable federalists were spreading disorder and confusion from one end of the country to the other, while from without, France was clamorous for the payment of a long-standing debt, and the treasury was empty. Bustamente took advantage of these difficulties to return to Mexico, and place himself at the head of the government. He announced his intention to continue the war against Texas, and sent General Bravo to Saltillo, to take command of an expedition into that country. A few ragged undisciplined soldiers were collected at that place for the purpose, and detained there without supplies or munitions. Bravo resigned in disgust.

Bustamente soon became unpopular, and was labouring zealously to avert the approaching financial crisis, when a French fleet under Admiral Baudin, came to Vera Cruz to obtain redress. The admiral would have nothing to do with diplomacy. He blockaded the port of Vera Cruz, and cut off the revenue derived from that city by the government, maintaining his position during the whole winter of 1838–9. Santa Anna had been, in 1838, intrusted by the government with the command of an army against Mexia, who had pronounced against the central government. He had defeated Mexia, taken him prisoner, and put him to death on the spot. We can find little fault with his conduct on this occasion, for the defeated officer himself said, when the sentence was announced to him, with admirable *sang froid*, "Santa Anna is right. I should have treated him so, had I been the conqueror."

Santa Anna was now called to the defence of Vera Cruz, where the French admiral had become weary of maintaining the blockade. He resolved to make an attack on the fortress. A bombardment was

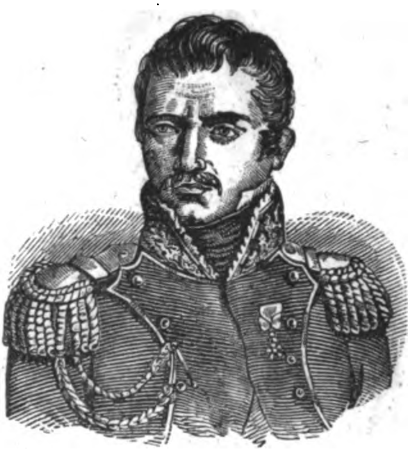


Mexia.

commenced by the whole force, which the Mexicans, with the utmost indifference, suffered to be towed slowly into position without firing a shot. They did not waken from their apathy until they found their castle walls less invulnerable than they had supposed. When they did return the fire, however, their powder was so bad that it would not send a ball through the side of a ship, and thus the effect of their excellent gunnery was lost. The inferior quality of the powder, however, did not prevent it from making a terrible havoc among the defenders themselves. A magazine exploded, blowing up the Tower of the Cavalier, and dealing death and destruction in all directions, and placing the garrison *hors du combat*. The firing ceased.

The French then attacked the city. Several engagements took place between them and the forces of Santa Anna, in one of which that general received a wound which cost him his leg. An arrangement was effected with the French, who left the harbour in peace, and Santa Anna, yielding up his authority, retired to his hacienda, to recover from the amputation of his limb, followed by the confidence and esteem of his countrymen, who he felt assured would soon call him to the head of the government.

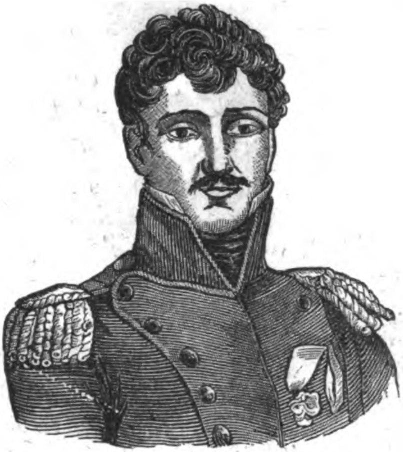
In 1839 General Canales excited a revolt in the northern provinces, which he endeavoured to unite into a separate republic, with the aid of Texas. The revolutionists declared their independence, and chose Canales general-in-chief and president. A volunteer force was raised at Bexar, and marched to join the federal army, under Colonel Jordan. Canales then entered Mexico, and marched to Coahuila. General Arista was sent against him. The superior merit of Canales, as a Mexican officer, consists in the facility with which he



Santiago Iman.

can change his side in a contest. He suffered himself to be defeated by Arista, in 1840, and then made his peace with the Mexicans, leaving the brave Jordan to fight his way back to Antonio de Bexar, at the head of his little band of Texans.

At the end of May, 1839, Santiago Iman, a militia officer of Yucatan, raised the standard of revolt in that state. His measures had been concerted with the commander of a garrison of Mexicans in Espeta, and he marched to that place to join his confederate. The commander of Espeta meanwhile changed his mind, and instead of giving up the place to Iman, he opened a fire upon him. It was in the night, and a battle ensued, in which Iman was worsted and compelled to retire. He was pursued, after some time, by the commander, and made to leave his encampment. His opponent then returned to Espeta, boasting that he had subdued the rebellion. Santiago Iman, however, was a man of considerable ability and political skill, and he remained in arms, and increased his numbers. On the 12th of December, he was attacked by General Requena, and defended himself until fifty of the government troops were killed and many wounded. He was driven from the place at the point of the bayonet, but his loss was very slight, and while Requena returned to report to his superior in Campeachy that he had given the rebel force to the winds, the hardy partisan prepared for an enterprise of some magnitude. On the 11th of February, 1840, he appeared before Valladolid de Yucatan, entered the suburbs, and gained a battle over the garrison, whose brave commander was killed in the fight. The victorious army was composed of the able general and a handful of



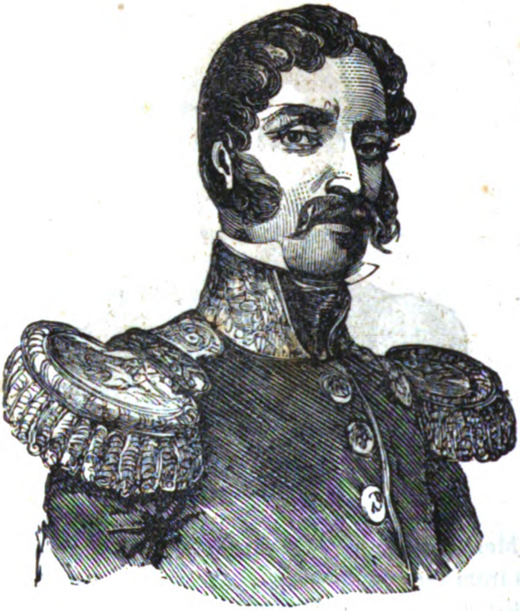
General Rivas.

Indians and Meztizoes gathered from the huts of the country, and a few deserters from the regular army.

A convention met at Iman's command, on the same night, and proclaimed the constitution of 1824. The news spread rapidly over the country, the people every where espoused the cause of the insurgents, and in a short time Campeachy was the only city that retained its allegiance to the central government. General Rivas commanded the city, with a garrison of a thousand men, but the revolutionists compelled him to surrender in June 1840, and the struggle was brought to an end. In March, 1841, a new constitution was proclaimed.

These difficulties hastened the fall of Bustamente. Paredes pronounced against him in 1841, and the movement becoming popular, Santa Anna joined in it. The latter officer had already corrupted several of the officers of Bustamente, and with their support he had little difficulty in expelling the president, and seating himself in the executive chair. The position of Santa Anna was one of the greatest difficulty, and his conduct in extricating the government from its embarrassments, prove him to be as able as he is crafty and unprincipled.

In 1841 a party of Texans invaded Santa Fe, were taken prisoners, and marched to the Mexican capital, under the most horrid sufferings from small pox, want, and the cruel treatment of the Mexicans, who slaughtered many of them in cold blood. One of the officers escorting them slew several, because they could not keep up, and carried their ears, strung together upon a piece of buckskin, to the governor of the next department, to prove that he had not allowed them to

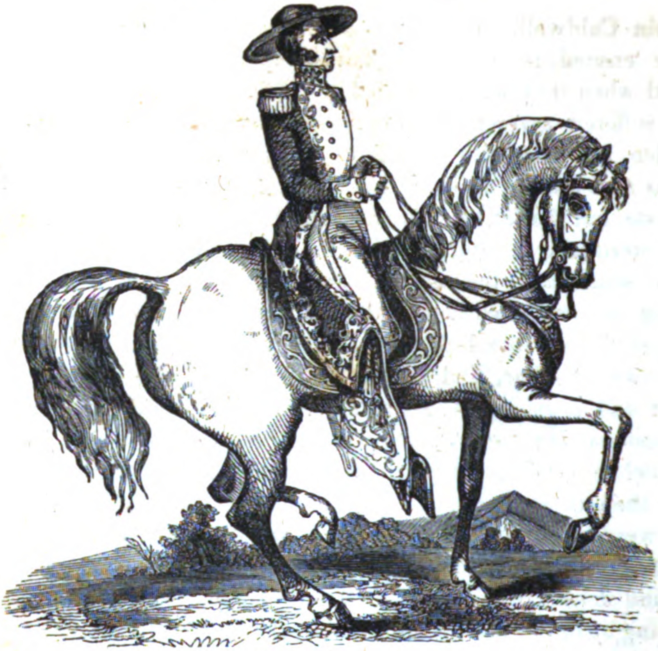


Paredes.

escape. At Mexico they were confined in the convent of Santiago, loaded with chains, and compelled to labour on the public works. The few who remained alive in June, 1842, were liberated by Santa Anna. Yucatan and Texas entered into a convention to support each other, and the Texan navy, under Commodore Moore, cleared the gulf of the Mexican flag. In 1842, General Morelos marched four thousand men into Yucatan, where the fever broke out in his camp, and in a few weeks he returned to Vera Cruz with a mere handful of men. Hundreds had perished in a single day. The expedition cost too much to be repeated, and the Yucatecos remained unmolested. They subsequently re-entered the Mexican confederacy on their own terms, and still pay a nominal allegiance to the republic.

Six years after the battle of San Jacinto, during which Texas had been making the most rapid improvements, she was suddenly invaded by General Bascus, who surprised San Antonio de Bexar, pillaged the town, and retired with his booty with Mexican celerity. General Canales soon after came with a strong party of cavalry and infantry, upon a similar expedition, but he was met by a party of Texans and defeated with loss. In September, General Woll came with a thousand men and captured Bexar. He remained there nearly a week. A party of Texans marched to the relief of the town, under Colonel Caldwell, and Captain Dawson came with another company to join Caldwell. Dawson was surrounded by the enemy, and a battle ensued, in which the Texans fought like tigers. The fight ended when they were all killed or disabled, and General Woll, who had suffered severely in the engagement, made a hasty retreat into Mexico, carrying with him fifty-two prisoners. The president of Texas sent a body of eight hundred cavalry to the Rio Grande, to retaliate, but the leader, General Somerville, did not effect any thing, and determined to return. With the chivalrous feelings so prevalent in the south-west, the men of the party disliked to return without having accomplished any thing, and three hundred of them elected Colonel Fisher as a leader, and marched onward. They captured the town of Mier, and demanded from the alcalde a supply of horses and provisions. These he promised to furnish, and they encamped outside the town to await the fulfilment of his engagement. Meanwhile General Ampudia marched to the relief of Mier, with more than three thousand men, and the main body of the Texans, who were in a destitute condition, actually forced their way back into the heart of the town, in the face of a heavy fire from the artillery and musketry of Ampudia. They were attacked on the following morning by the whole force of the enemy, and one of the most desperate battles of America followed. The rifles of the Texans were discharged rapidly and fatally, and death gathered victims from every housetop, and in every street where the Mexicans showed themselves. The final issue of the conflict might have been in favour of the gallant Texans, but their supply of ammunition became exhausted, and they very reluctantly accepted the terms offered by Ampudia. He broke them as soon as his enemy was in his power, and marched the prisoners off to Mexico, to undergo the same sufferings as their unfortunate countrymen, who were taken in the Santa Fe expedition. Revolting against the barbarity of their tormentors, the prisoners rose on their guard and escaped; but they could not find their way out of the country, and were retaken. Seventeen of their number were put to death as a punishment for the attempted escape. Many an arm has been nerved to high deeds of chivalry in the contest between the United States and Mexico, by the thought of the sufferings experienced at the hands of the treacherous Mexicans, by Americans, on these fatal expeditions.

Santa Anna finding that the people began to look for some more decisive movements on his part, in fulfilment of the great promises he had made with regard to Texas, attempted to amuse them, and the Texans too, by accepting the offers of the British minister as mediator, and a negotiation was entered into, between the two states, which proceeded slowly, and finally broke up without settling any



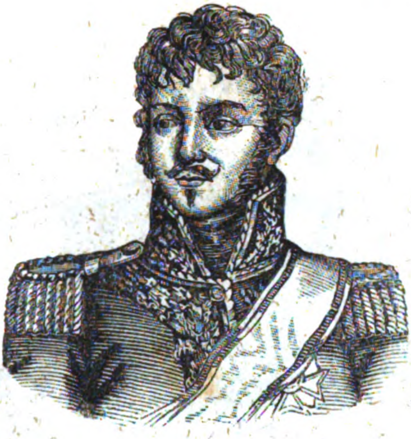
Santa Anna.

point in dispute. The principal articles insisted on by the Mexicans was, that Texas should not form a connection with the United States, which many of the people of Texas and the United States, were beginning to look upon favourably. This measure increased in public favour, and was finally consummated on the 1st of March, 1845, by the passage of joint resolutions for that pupose by the American congress, as hereafter related.

The internal affairs of Mexico meanwhile had undergone material changes. A junta of notables was convened by Santa Anna, in 1842, to form a new constitution, and on the 13th of June, 1843, it proclaimed the result of its deliberations, in the shape of the "Bases of Political Organization of the Mexican Republic." Under this new constitution, Santa Anna was elected the first president.

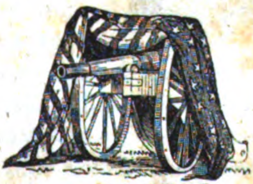
In 1843, General Santmanet attempted a revolution in Tabasco, which proved unsuccessful, and he fled to Havana, where he collected a party of adventurers and returned to Mexico, in 1844. He was shipwrecked on the bar of the Rio Tabasco, and he and his party fell into the hands of General Ampudia, who cut off his head, boiled it in oil, and stuck it up on a pole to blacken in the sun.

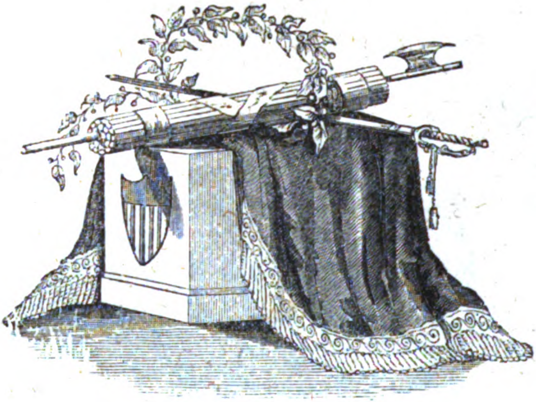
A hostile movement of the president against Paredes, however, caused the friends of that general to prepare for revolt, and a civil



Santmanet.

war soon broke out. Santa Anna marched at the head of the army to quell the insurrection, but his soldiers ran away, and he was obliged to deliver himself a prisoner, into the hands of his enemies. His lieutenant, Canalizo, surrendered the capital, and General Herrera was elevated to the presidency. Santa Anna was for a time imprisoned in Perote Castle; but after long deliberation, the congress condemned him to perpetual exile. He embarked in June, 1845, for Havana, with his wife and a few friends, and occupied himself with puerile pursuits, until August, 1846, when he terminated his perpetual exile, by landing at Vera Cruz, and becoming at once president and dictator. Herrera had caused the passage of a vote by the congress, recognizing the independence of Texas, on condition of her not annexing herself to the United States, which was an unpopular measure, and Paredes took advantage of it to unseat Herrera. He became president himself, and soon after involved his country in war with the United States. His ill fortune in that war, of course caused his fall, and the elevation of Santa Anna.





CHAPTER IX.

CAUSES OF THE MEXICAN WAR.

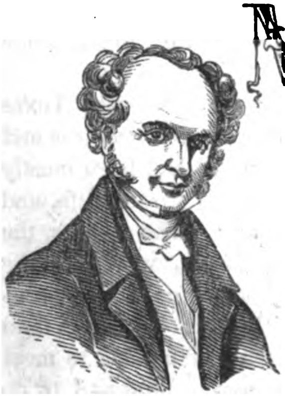
THE same causes which produced the revolution in Texas, and which carried her triumphantly through its checkered events, induced her people to regard the United States with admiration and gratitude. Most of the Texan colonists had once been citizens of the Union; they had grown up with her growth, and rejoiced in her prosperity; when a worse than savage warfare had desolated their borders, her sons had been the first to rush to their assistance; it was her army, her soldiers, her skill, that had routed Santa Anna at San Jacinto, and throughout the whole struggle, the consciousness that a superior power was sympathizing with them, had nerved their people to action. These were the grounds for that high respect evinced by the Texans towards the United States. They made her proud of her origin, of her struggle, and of her geographical position near such an ally, and induced her, as we have seen, to model her national constitution after that of her foster parent.

With these feelings of regard for the United States, were mingled others little less powerful. Mexico had not yet consented to the partition of her ancient empire; she had denounced the forced agreement with Santa Anna, and declared her determination never to assent to Texan independence. At that time, this determination seemed but the effect of the impotent ravings consequent on mortified pride; but it was by no means improbable that a time might come, when, having suppressed internal faction, she would pour down her concentrated legions upon the thinly peopled villages of Texas, and desolate whole provinces. Even should this not happen, the system of petty warfare perpetually maintained along the borders, prevented all repose and security. Texas began to feel herself inadequate to the harassing struggle, which rendered formidable even the weakness of her obstinate foe. Her only resource was the establishment of such a relation with the United States as would awe Mexico, and secure to herself safety and respectability, both at home and abroad.

But, in addition to all this, there was another reason why Texas leaned toward the northern republic with a feeling of weakness and dependence. The original settlers of the country had been mostly daring adventurers, bred amid the wild scenes of western life, and dependent on the rifle for their very subsistence. The trapper, the buffalo hunter, the restless, roving, backwoodsman, who, like the Indian, moved westward as civilization encroached on his solitudes —these were the fathers of the Texan revolution. In battle, and among the denizens of the forest, they were irresistible; but to meet in organized convention to form laws for a new nation, and to go through the drudgery necessary to the first exercise of such laws, were labours utterly above their abilities. With some few allowances for manner of life, they could accommodate themselves to almost any old government; but to originate a new one, or to execute it after its origination, was the point at which they failed. Unlike the people of the Thirteen Colonies, they had never made government and the rights of man, both natural and acquired, their study.

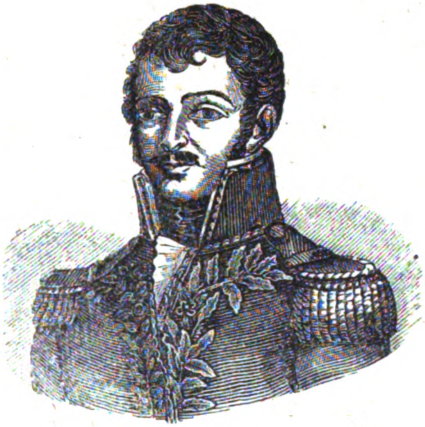
It was in view of all these circumstances, that Texas, at a very early period of her struggle, expressed a desire to be united as a state to the American Union. She had apparently battled, not so much for absolute independence, as for emancipation from Mexican tyranny; and in order to secure this object, she laid less stress on national sovereignty, than upon a state of dependence which would insure her safety. This disposition seems a little strange. Most nations, however small, vaunt themselves in their independence of foreign control, especially if that independence has been achieved by their own efforts. The reasons given are, however, the solution; the burden of self-government was too great for a young and irregularly settled country.

On the 4th of August, 1837, the government of Texas made a proposition to the American Union to be admitted as a state. Mr. Van Buren was then president. After mature deliberation, he refused to receive the proposition, since, as he alleged, it would violate the treaty of amity between Mexico and our government, and by espousing the Texan quarrel, involve two friendly nations in unnecessary war. The offer was not pressed, and Texas still remained exposed to the desultory attacks of small parties from Mexico. Negotiations for loans and troops were, however, carried on with the United States, and also with Europe. No definite interference was made by any of the powers who were applied to.



MR. VAN BUREN'S administration terminated while affairs were in this position. Mr. Tyler soon after assumed the executive chair. The subject of Texan annexation seems to have early engrossed his attention, although it was strenuously opposed by the party which had elevated him to power, as well as by a large portion of their political opponents. On the 6th of October, 1843, Mr. Upshur, secretary of state, intimated to the Texan minister that proposals of annexation would not be unfavourably received, and recommended a renewal of efforts for that purpose. This was communicated to the president of Texas, who immediately closed with the proposal.

These movements of Mr. Tyler attracted the notice of both the political parties in the Union, and drew out the opinions of leading men, and the criticisms of the press. The Whig party in general showed themselves utterly averse to the measure; but with their antagonists the scheme daily gained ground. It soon became one of the great topics of discussion; and in proportion as the official term of the president drew near its close, it was more and more evident that annexation would be one of the rallying points on which, during the national election, the opposing masses would test their strength. At the same time, Mexico was not idle. She had watched the dan-

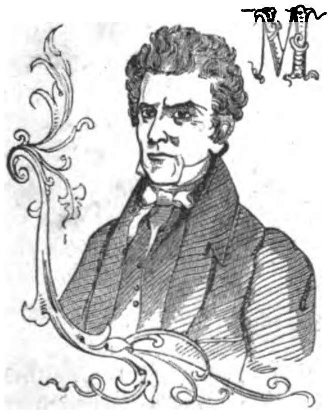


Bocanegra.

gerous movement from its origin, and the fear of losing a large portion of her territory, roused her to exertions greater than any she had put forth since her revolution. As Mr. Van Buren had predicted, she declared that the act would be a violation of the treaty between the two nations, the forerunner and signal for war, and an infringement of the law of nations. She declared her determination never to yield Texas, while it received assistance from a foreign power; and denounced the Texans as a band of outlaws, incapable of governing themselves, and driven by the fear of anarchy, to beg a union with some stronger nation. "If a party in Texas is now endeavouring to effect its incorporation with the United States, it is from a consciousness of their notorious incapability to form and constitute an independent nation, without their having changed their situation, or acquired any right to separate themselves from their mother country. His Excellency, the provisional president, resting on this deep conviction, is obliged to prevent an aggression, unprecedented in the annals of the world, from being consummated; and if it is indispensable for the Mexican nation to seek security for its rights at the expense of the disasters of war, it will call upon God, and rely on its own efforts for the defence of its just cause." Such was the language addressed by Mr. Bocanegra, the Mexican minister of foreign relations, to Waddy Thompson, American minister in Mexico. The note was dated August 23, 1843.

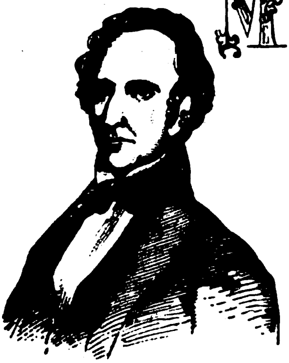
Notwithstanding this express declaration of anticipated war, neither Texas or the United States relaxed their efforts, to effect a treaty of annexation. The protest of Mr. Bocanegra was but slightly noticed, and the newspapers and leading statesmen favourable to the measure, exerted every effort to have it consummated. Political meetings echoed warm responses to the desire of the Texans; and amid the stars which decorated the national colours, was hung another—the "one lone star"—to complete the sovereignty of American empire. Alarmed by these demonstrations, Mexico repeated, through General Almonte, minister at Washington, her remonstrances and threats of war. "If," says that officer, in a note to Mr. Upshur, [November 3, 1843,] "contrary to the hopes and wishes entertained by the government of the undersigned, for the preservation of the good understanding and harmony which should reign between the two neighbouring and friendly republics, the United States should in defiance of good faith, and the principles of justice, which they have constantly proclaimed, commit the unheard of act of violence of appropriating to themselves an integral part of the Mexican territory, the undersigned, in the name of his nation, and now for them protests in the most solemn manner against such an aggression; and he moreover declares, by express order of his government, that on sanction being given by the executive of the Union to the incorporation of Texas into the United States, he will consider his mission ended, seeing that, as the secretary of state will have learned, the Mexican government is resolved to declare war as soon as it receives intimation of such an act."

Such was the position of the Texas annexation question, when, on the 28th of February, 1844, Mr. Upshur, American secretary of state was killed by an explosion on board of the steamer Princeton. He was succeeded by Hon. John C. Calhoun, with whom annexation was a favourite project. It was accordingly carried forward so vigorously by that active statesman.



MR. CALHOUN, on the 12th of April, 1844, with Messrs. Van Zandt and Henderson, ministers plenipotentiary of Texas, signed a treaty constituting Texas a part of the American Union. Mr. Tyler submitted this instrument to the Senate, April 22, 1844, and on the 8th of June that body, by a vote of thirty-five to sixteen, rejected it. A respite was thus allowed for a more ample consideration of the subject; and during this interval, Mexico exerted all her influence to defeat the measure, should it again be brought before the American people.

At the presidential election in November, 1844, the annexation of Texas was made the great question round which the Democratic party rallied. Mr. Polk, their candidate, was elected; and this being construed by President Tyler as a proof of the measure being acceptable to a majority of the people, he directed all his efforts to effect another treaty before the termination of his official term. He succeeded. On the 1st of March, 1845, Congress passed the joint resolution, providing that the territory "rightfully belonging to the republic of Texas, should form part of the American Union on condition that the latter government should settle all questions of boundary that may arise with other governments."

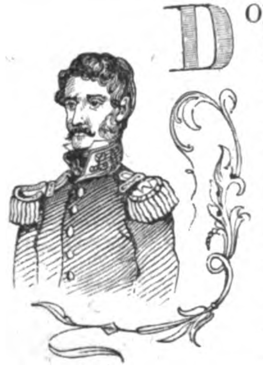


MR. TYLER, as president, signed the document on the same day, and on the 4th of July it was ratified by the Texan Convention. The act thus consummated, was by far the most important of Mr. Tyler's administration.

It will be observed, that the terms of the joint resolution assigned to the United States the almost hopeless task of settling the boundary between Texas and Mexico, at a time when the latter power had solemnly declared war to be a consequence of the adoption of the joint resolution. The question of disputed boundary is always a vexed one; but under the above circumstances, its troubles and aggravation promised to be endless. The Texans claimed the whole country east of the Rio Grande. Santa Anna, while a prisoner in the United States, thus defined the boundary: "Beginning," he says, "at the mouth of the Rio Grande, thence up the principal stream of said river to its source; thence due north to the 42d° of north latitude; thence along the boundary line as defined in the treaty between the United States and Spain (February, 1819,) to the beginning." The Americans rested a claim on the latter treaty. But this seems inadmissible, inasmuch as Santa Anna was then a captive, evidently acting against his intentions, and in addition to which, the Mexican government refused to sanction his act, which sanction the instrument required previous to becoming an international law. Thus the question of boundary being left open, afforded opportunities which have since been improved, of fomenting the unhappy rupture between two sister republics, and rendering still more exasperated the feelings which have ever been entertained between them concerning Texas.

Although the annexation of Texas had been expected by Mexico, yet the blow seems to have been unexpected. On the 6th of March, 1845, only a few days after the ratification of the joint resolution, the minister at Washington denounced it as "an act of aggression the most unjust which can be found recorded in the annals of modern history—namely, that of despoiling a friendly nation like Mexico, of a considerable portion of her territory." At the same time he declared his mission ended, and on demanding and receiving his passports, he returned to Mexico.

Meanwhile, the danger of losing Texas had had the effect of uniting, in some measure, the various parties of Mexico, in opposition to the measure. Herrera, the president, was disposed to a peaceful adjustment of the difficulty; but the popular voice was loud against him.



DON MARIANA PAREDES, a conspicuous military leader, and a bitter enemy of the United States, was the principal chief of the opposition, and strenuous efforts were now made to overthrow the existing government. Herrera, however, maintained a firm pacific policy. The government was not in a condition to become the aggressors in a struggle with their northern neighbour; and news was received at Washington that Mexico was really willing to listen to terms of reconciliation. Accordingly, in the month of September, 1845, instructions were sent from Washington to our consul in Mexico, "to ascertain from the Mexican government whether they would receive an envoy from the United States, intrusted with full power to adjust all questions in dispute between the two governments." In October the proposition was submitted to the Mexican minister of state, who returned a favourable answer. His language is important. "In answer I have to say to you, that although the Mexican nation is deeply injured by the United States through the acts committed by them in the department of Texas, which belongs to this nation, my government is disposed to receive the commissioner of the United States who may come to this capital with full powers from his government to settle the present dispute, in a peaceful, reasonable, and honourable manner. . . . . As my government believes this invitation to be made in good faith, and with the real desire that it may lead to a favourable conclusion, it also hopes that the commissioner will be a person endowed with the qualities proper for the attainment of this end; that his dignity, prudence, and moderation, and the discreetness and reasonableness of his proposals will contribute to calm, as much as possible, the just irritation of the Mexicans; and in fine, that the conduct of the commissioner on all points, may be such as to persuade them that they may obtain satisfaction for their injuries through the means of reason and peace, and without being obliged to resort to those of arms and force."

As the United States had already sent a naval force to Vera Cruz, the Mexican minister requested that it might be withdrawn, "lest its continued presence might assume the appearance of menace and coercion, pending the negotiations." This was complied with.

On the 10th of October, 1845, Mr. John Slidell, of Louisiana, was commissioned by President Polk, as envoy extraordinary, and minister plenipotentiary of the United States to Mexico, and was intrusted with full powers to adjust both the questions of the Texas boundary and of indemnification to our citizens. The new functionary set out immediately, and arrived at Vera Cruz on the 30th of November. He was courteously received, but found the country in a state of fearful irritation. Notwithstanding that every effort had been made by both governments to keep a knowledge of his mission and its object, from the people, yet vague rumours had been disseminated, and thousands were now openly accusing Herrera of treason, in wishing to alienate a portion of Mexico to the United States. Government itself was not prepared for his sudden arrival. So long as no commissioner or minister was actually in the country, the government seemed able to stand up against the imputations of treason which were heaped upon it; but at this juncture, should the envoy suddenly present himself at the capital, it expected to be utterly overthrown. Mr. Black, the American minister, was immediately informed of this embarrassment, and was earnestly desired to prevail on Mr. Slidell to abstain from too sudden an appearance at the capital. "His appearance at the capital, at this time," said the minister of foreign affairs, "might prove destructive to the government, and thus defeat the whole affair. You know the opposition are calling us traitors for entering into this arrangement with you." The object of the government was to delay the negotiation until the following month, when the new congress would assemble, under whose countenance and protection it would feel itself strong enough to enter upon such a delicate business

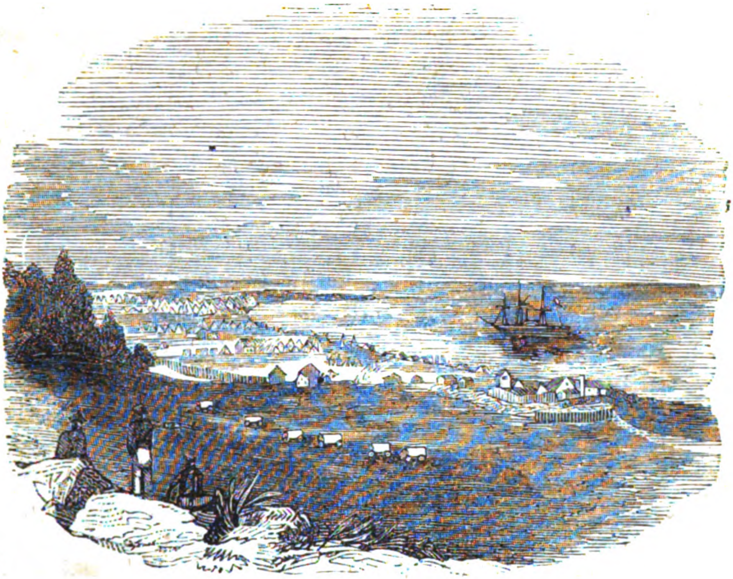
On receiving this notice from the Mexican minister, Mr. Black immediately left Mexico, and met Mr. Slidell at Puebla. The envoy, however, deemed it his duty to proceed immediately to the capital. He entered it on the 6th of December, and on the 8th requested his recognition by the existing government. The Mexican minister delayed an answer, a circumstance that drew two more requests from the envoy. On the 24th of December, government refused to receive Mr. Slidell, in any other capacity than that to which they had at first agreed—as a minister to settle the Texas boundary, *exclusive* of all other questions.

Only a few days after, the storm burst. Herrera was deposed, (December 30,) and General Paredes became supreme governor of Mexico. He refused to receive Mr. Slidell, and that officer returned to the United States.

Meanwhile President Polk, as head of the national army, had been assiduously preparing for war. On the 21st of March, 1845, orders were issued to General Zachary Taylor, commandant at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, to prepare the troops at that place for marching into Texas as soon as ordered. On the 28th of May, Secretary Marcy, of the war department, wrote to the general as follows: "By order of the president, you are directed to cause the forces now under your command, and those which may be assigned to it, to be put into a position where they may most promptly and efficiently act in defence of Texas, in the event it should become necessary or proper to employ them for that purpose." Further instructions were added by Mr. Bancroft, *ad interim* secretary of war, on the 15th of June, 1845. "On the 4th of July, or very soon thereafter, the convention of the people of Texas, will probably accept the proposition of annexation, under the joint resolution of the late congress of the United States. That acceptance will constitute Texas an intregal portion of our country.

"In anticipation of that event you will forthwith make a forward movement with the troops under your command, and advance to the mouth of the Sabine, or to such other point on the Gulf of Mexico, or its navigable waters, as in your judgment may be most convenient for an embarkation, at the proper time for the western frontier of Texas. . . . . The point of your ultimate destination is the western frontier of Texas, where you will select and occupy in or near the Rio Grande del Norte, such a site as will consist with the health of your troops and will be best adapted to repel invasion, and to protect what in the event of annexation will be our western border. You will limit yourself to the defence of the territory of Texas, unless Mexico should declare war against the United States. Your movement to the Gulf of Mexico and your preparations to embark for the western frontier of Texas are to be made without delay; but you will not effect a landing on that frontier, until you have yourself ascertained the due acceptance by Texas of the proffered terms of annexation."

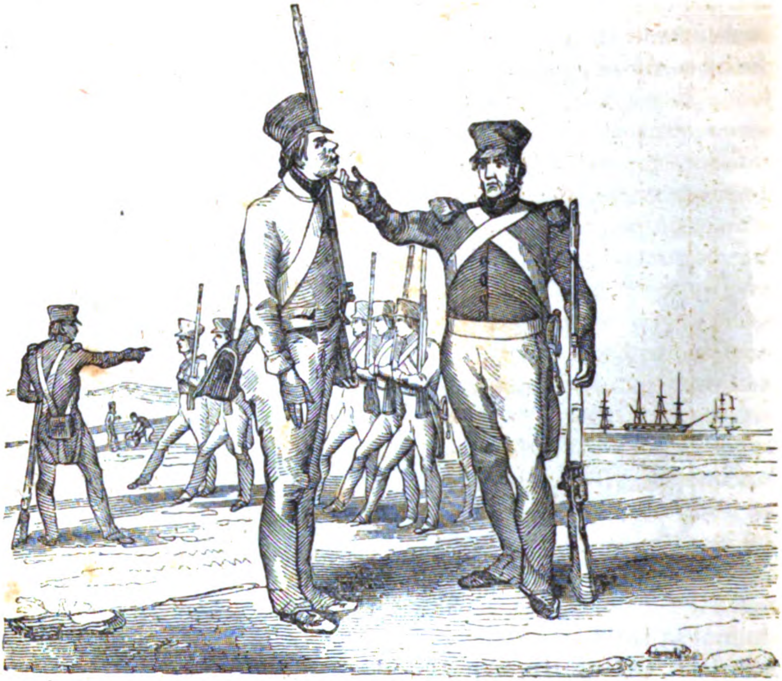
On the 4th of July, Texas accepted, as has already been mentioned, the joint resolution, thus constituting herself a part of the



Corpus Christi.

American Union. On the 7th, she requested President Polk to occupy her ports, and send an army for her defence. In answer to this demand, the president immediately ordered General Taylor to Corpus Christi. He was directed to confine himself to Texas, unless the Mexicans attempted to cross the Rio Grande, in which case he was authorized to invade Mexico. The propriety of advancing further towards the Rio Grande was left to his discretion.

During all this time, General Taylor supposed that negotiations for peace were being carried on with a prospect of success. This belief was strengthened by a letter from Commodore Conner, of the American Gulf squadron, dated Vera Cruz, October 24, by which the general was informed, "that the Mexican government had just acceded to the proposal to arrange the existing difficulties by negotiation. But on the 13th of January, 1846, Secretary Marcy instructed him as follows:—"I am directed by the president to instruct you to advance and occupy, with the troops under your command, positions on or near the east bank of the Rio del Norte, as soon as it can conveniently be done, with reference to the season and the routes by which your movements must be made. From the views heretofore presented to this department, it is presumed Point Isabel will be considered by you an eligible situation. This point, or some one near it, and points opposite Matamoras and Mier, and in the vicinity



Drilling raw Recruits.

of Loredo, are suggested to your consideration. Should you attempt to exercise the right, which the United States have in common with Mexico, to a free navigation of the Del Norte, it is probable that Mexico would interpose resistance. You will not attempt to enforce this right without further instructions.

While at Corpus Christi, General Taylor occupied himself in teaching his newly levied troops the difficult and tedious duties of military discipline. His whole force was four thousand and forty-nine, but in case of emergency he had been authorized "to accept volunteers from the states of Louisiana and Alabama, and even from Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky." It is added in the same letter, "Should Mexico declare war, or commence hostilities, by crossing the Rio Grande with a considerable force, you are instructed to lose no time in giving information to the authorities of each or any of the above-mentioned states, as to the number of volunteers you may want from them respectively. Should you require troops from any of these states, it would be important to have them with the least possible delay. The authorities of these states will be apprized that you are authorized to receive volunteers from them, and you may calculate that they will promptly join you when it is made known that their services are required. Orders have been issued to the naval force in the Gulf of Mexico to co-operate with you. You will, as far as practicable, hold communication with the commanders of our national vessels in your vicinity, and avail yourself of any assistance that can be derived from their co-operation."

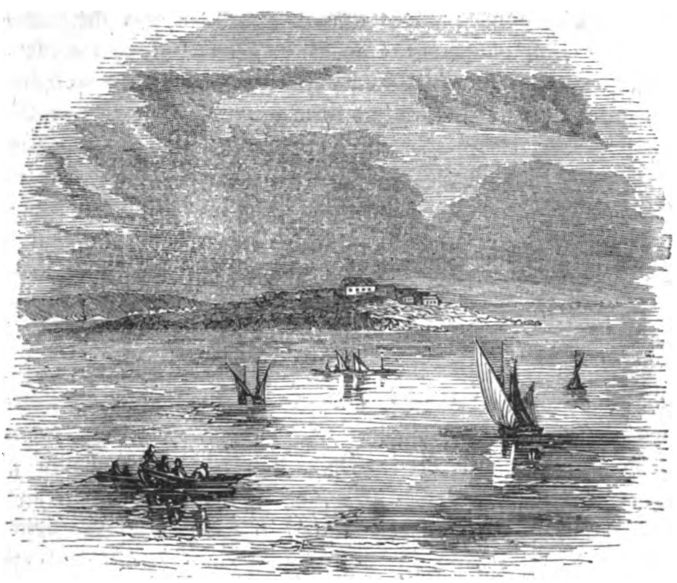
Corpus Christi is well situated, both for promoting the health of an army, and affording opportunities for the evolutions of discipline. The village stands on the western shore of Corpus Christi bay. It consists of some twenty or thirty houses, partly situated on a shelf of land elevated some six or eight feet above the water, about two hundred yards broad, and on a bluff which rises from the plain to the height of one hundred feet. The bay at this point is in the shape of a crescent, extending in a south-east direction to Padre Island, and north-west to the mouth of the Nueces.

On the 8th of March the second regiment of dragoons under Colonel Twiggs, with Ringgold's artillery, commenced its march for the Rio Grande. The first and second brigade, under General Worth and Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh followed on the 9th and 10th. The remainder of the army, accompanied by General Taylor and staff, left on the 11th. The variety of scenery through which the troops passed, during this march, has perhaps never been surpassed within the same limits. At first the country appeared like one vast garden, waving with flowers of the most gorgeous dyes. Then followed a rolling prairie, succeeded by an arid waste, destitute of either water or vegetation. "We had fourteen miles to march to get water," says Captain Henry, on the 18th of March, "and were forced to halt repeatedly; and the men sat down with parched mouths upon the hot sand, with the tropical sun beating on them. The prairie had a few sickly blades of grass upon it; the sand was like hot ashes, and when you stepped upon it you sank up to the ankle. The last two miles I could not but pity the men; many gave out and lay down by the roadside, perfectly exhausted, and looking as if they did not care for life." This was succeeded by a more genial region, consisting of a hard clayey soil, covered by light vegetation and woods. On reaching the Colorado, [March 20,] the Americans observed about thirty Mexicans, who threatened to fire, should the general cross that stream. At the same time bugles were sounded for a considerable distance up the river, and a skirmish seemed inevitable. The general prepared to cross; and while his men were cutting down the bank to facilitate the passage of the train, he apprized the Mexicans, that the first Mexican he saw, after his men had entered the water, should be shot. The troops then pushed into the river, the batteries were drawn up to cover the passage, and the port fires lighted. A battalion of four artillery companies, under Captain C. F. Smith, composed the forlorn hope. General Worth and staff rode to their front and led the way. At this moment the adjutant-general of General Mejia, commandant of Matamoras, approached General Taylor with a paper from his superior, forbidding his crossing, and stating that he would regard the act as a declaration of war. He further declared that a fight was inevitable. The Americans crossed, however, without opposition.

West of the Colorado, the appearance of the country took an entire change, presenting a beauty and luxuriance, as new to the soldiers as it was healthful and refreshing. Captain Henry, speaking of the 24th of March, says:—"I do not think I have ever felt a sweeter or a fresher morning. The morning-star and moon were about setting; the former, even as day broke, looked like a diamond set in the clear blue sky. The country was beautiful. We marched through a wilderness of mesquite and acacia thickets, fragrant with the blossom of the latter. The grass was rich. The pea-vine, with its delicate blossom abundant, and the country sufficiently rolling to relieve the eye. The air from the sea was delightful, and every thing in nature appeared so happy, that it was perfectly exhilarating. ..... Emerging from the mesquite, after a march of three miles, we came suddenly upon an open prairie, extending apparently to the gulf, with no trees visible. The mirage in the distance was beautiful; singular, too, for it looked as if the prairie was on fire, whereas it was the waves of this peculiarly heated atmosphere. We marched for some distance through a wilderness of wild peas, than which nothing is more nutritious for animals; the mesquite grass was also very luxuriant.

On the evening of the 23d, General Taylor was met by a Mexican from Point Isabel, who reported that the guard stationed there had left for Matamoras, and that all the houses, except one, had been burned. On the following day, the general halted his command on the road, and leaving the main army with General Worth, he started for Point Isabel with the wagons and an escort of dragoons. Worth marched the troops within twelve miles of Matamoras, and there halted.

When near Point Isabel, General Taylor was met by a number of Mexicans, among whom was the prefect of Tamaulipas. These had been constituted a mission to protest against his occupation of their territory. While the interview lasted, smoke was observed to rise from the point, and the general was convinced that its buildings had been purposely fired. He therefore directed the attention of the



Point Isabel.

delegation to this evidence of hostility, and informed them, that their communication would be answered by him, when opposite Matamoras. He then sent the dragoons, under Colonel Twiggs, to arrest the flames. The colonel succeeded in saving a few buildings; but the Mexican authorities had already left the place. General Taylor soon followed the dragoons, and had the satisfaction to find that the expected supplies had already arrived by steamboat. The point was surveyed with a view to its defence, and a work ordered to be constructed under the superintendence of Captain Sanders of the engineers. Major John Munroe, who had lately arrived with the transports, was intrusted with the command. He was provided with two companies of artillery, consisting of about four hundred and fifty men, with six brass six-pounders, two long eighteens, and two ships' guns. The fort was amply provided with provisions, powder, and ball.

On the 25th, General Worth moved the camp three miles to Palo Alto. Here, on the 27th, he was joined by General Taylor, at the head of the dragoons and staff. The march recommenced on the 28th; at eleven o'clock of which day, the army reached the Rio Grande.

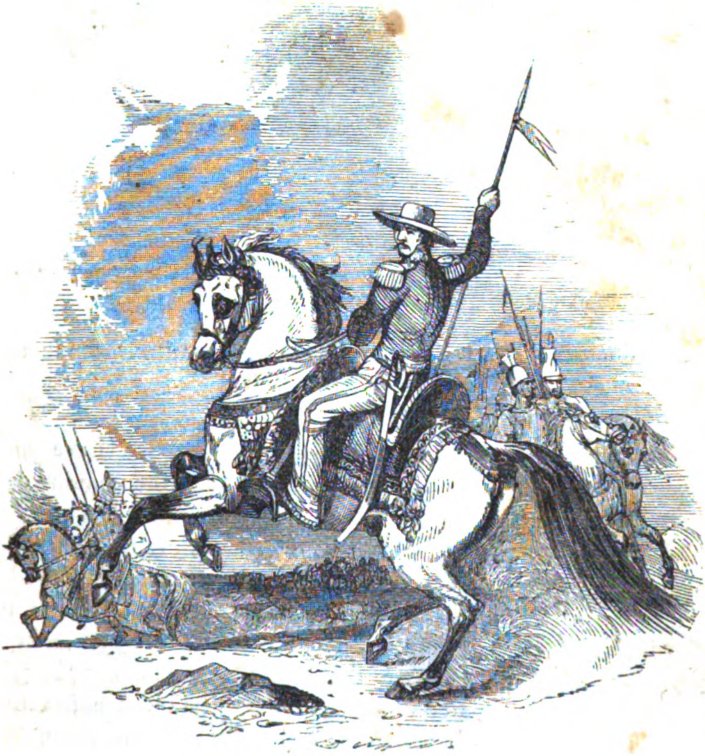
Thus ended the famous march from Corpus Christi to the Del Norte. As a military feat, there is nothing remarkable about it, except the exactness and promptitude with which each part was executed. But its consequences were weighty; it was the immediate cause of the commencement of hostilities by the Mexicans. It is certain, that prior to it, the inhabitants along the river were well disposed toward the Americans. Traders from Matamoras were constantly in the camp at Corpus Christi. In February, General Taylor mentions some influential citizens of that town as then in his camp, with a large number of mules for sale. The interview with the prefect of Tamaulipas, and the warning at the Arroya Colorado had led to no ill words or rash conduct. Thus far, all had been bloodless.

During the march, the great advantages of the discipline acquired at Corpus Christi, were conspicuously exhibited. With large portions of the troops, it was the first time that the evolutions of the line had been witnessed. At the Colorado, in the face of expected resistance, the passage was effected with a degree of order, regularity, and despatch, eminently creditable. The field-pieces being placed in battery on the banks, so as to cover the crossing, the advance was led by Captain C. F. Smith, of the 2d artillery, with the light companies of the 2d bigade, (Worth's.) A more steady and spirited movement has rarely been witnessed. The same promptness, and soldier-like conduct, was displayed by Colonel Twiggs at Point Isabel.

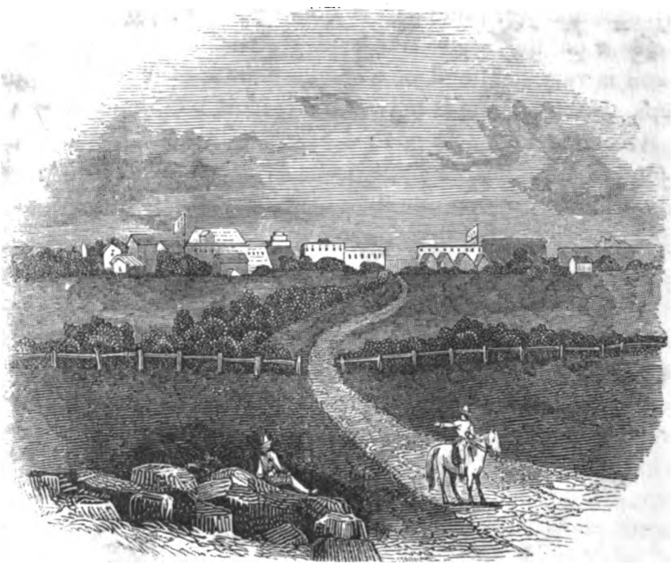
Two hours after the arrival of the Americans opposite Matamoras, the national flag was planted on the river bank, amid strains of patriotic music. Simultaneously with its appearance the colours of France, Spain, and England were run up from the different consulates. Not long previous to this, two dragoons of the advance guard were surprised by the Mexicans, and carried prisoners into Matamoras. This seizure caused much excitement; but on the requisition of General Taylor, the men with their effects were promptly returned. They had received good treatment. Immediately after this ceremony, General Worth and staff was sent by General Taylor, as the bearer of despatches to the commandant at Matamoras. Worth appeared on the Rio Grande, holding a white flag, and was soon met by two Mexican officers and an interpreter in a boat. After considerable delay, General Mejia, the commandant, sent General La Vega to meet the American officer. A long but fruitless altercation ensued. Worth demanded an interview with the American consul, which was refused; and he then informed La Vega, that the refusal was considered as a "belligerent act." Soon after the conference closed, and the Americans recrossed the river.

Matamoras, as seen from the American camp, is thus described by Captain Henry: "The main body of the city is half a mile from the river; scattering houses near the bank. From our position we can discover several strongholds, and it looks as if it was well defended.

It is reported that the different forts are well supplied with ammunition, and ordnance of heavy calibre. At this point the river runs nearly east and west, and is one hundred and seventy yards wide. The city is on the south side, and situated in an alluvial bottom. The soil is very rich, and of a similar character to that on the Mississippi. If the climate is not too dry it must be immensely valuable. The river reminds one a good deal of the Arkansas, and the water is capital for drinking. The Mexicans expected we would have struck the river higher up, opposite their main ferry, where they are reported to be actively engaged in throwing up a work."



Mexican Lancer.



The City of Matamoras.

CHAPTER X.

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN ON THE RIO GRANDE. SIEGE OF FORT BROWN.

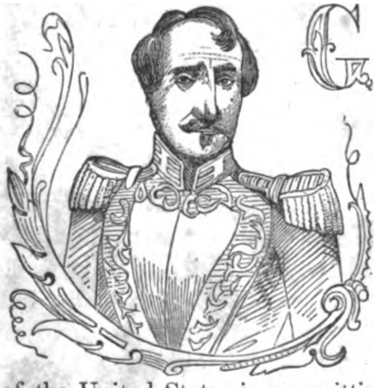
IN the foregoing chapter, we have endeavoured to detect and trace the genuine causes of hostilities between the United States and Mexico. Commencing at the battle of San Jacinto, we have discovered the desire of the Texans, even at that early date, to be admitted into the northern Union—the elements of that desire—the efforts to satisfy it—the progress of the question of annexation—its final consummation, in opposition to the pointed remonstrances of Mexico—the consequent position assumed by the latter power—the failure of negotiation—finally, the march of an armed American force through Texas to the verge of Mexico. As yet, it is true, there had been no declaration of war, or any act of international hostility; but this state of things could not long last. A breath of wind was sufficient to lower the balance for either peace or war; and unhappily for humanity, the dark side of the alternative prevailed. The partition between the two republics was broken down. The windows of wrath opened, and the besom of destruction swept over Mexico, with a speed and violence which soon threatened to blot out her nationality for ever.

The first military operations on both sides were purely defensive. General Taylor, on March 29th, the day after arriving on the river, says, "Our approach seems to have created much excitement in Matamoras, and a great deal of activity has been displayed since our arrival in the preparation of batteries. The left bank is now under reconnoissance of our engineer officers, and I shall lose no time in strengthening our position, by such defensive works as may be necessary, employing for that purpose a portion of the heavy guns brought round by sea." A few days after, he adds, "On our side, a battery for four eighteen-pounders will be completed, and the guns placed in battery to-day. The guns bear directly upon the public square of Matamoras, and within good range for demolishing the town. Their object cannot be mistaken by the enemy, and will, I think, effectually restrain him from any enterprises upon our side of the river. A strong bastioned field fort for a garrison of five hundred men has been laid out by the engineers in the rear of the battery, and will be commenced immediately. This work will enable a brigade to maintain this position against any Mexican odds, and will leave me free to dispose of the other corps as considerations of health and convenience may render desirable." Such was the commencement of Fort Brown, which subsequently became famous for its gallant resistance to a vastly superior force, and for the death of the lamented officer after whom it was named.

During the night of March 29th, the Mexicans mounted a heavy gun in a battery made of sand bags, and other works were erected at different stations along the river. On the evening following, the American camp was thrown into excitement by a report that the enemy had determined on a night attack. It was also affirmed that they had crossed the river, and were marching towards Point Isabel. General Taylor immediately took active measures to provide for the worst. The watchword was given, and the troops ordered to sleep upon their arms. In addition to this, Captain May, with a squadron of the 2d dragoons, was directed to ride to Point Isabel, a distance of twenty-seven miles, in four hours, so as to reinforce the garrison of Major Munroe. Morning dawned; no gun was fired, and no attack made upon the point.

During the whole of this and the following day, the enemy worked hard to complete their sand bag batteries. Fort Paredes, the principal work, was erected to control the passage of the river.

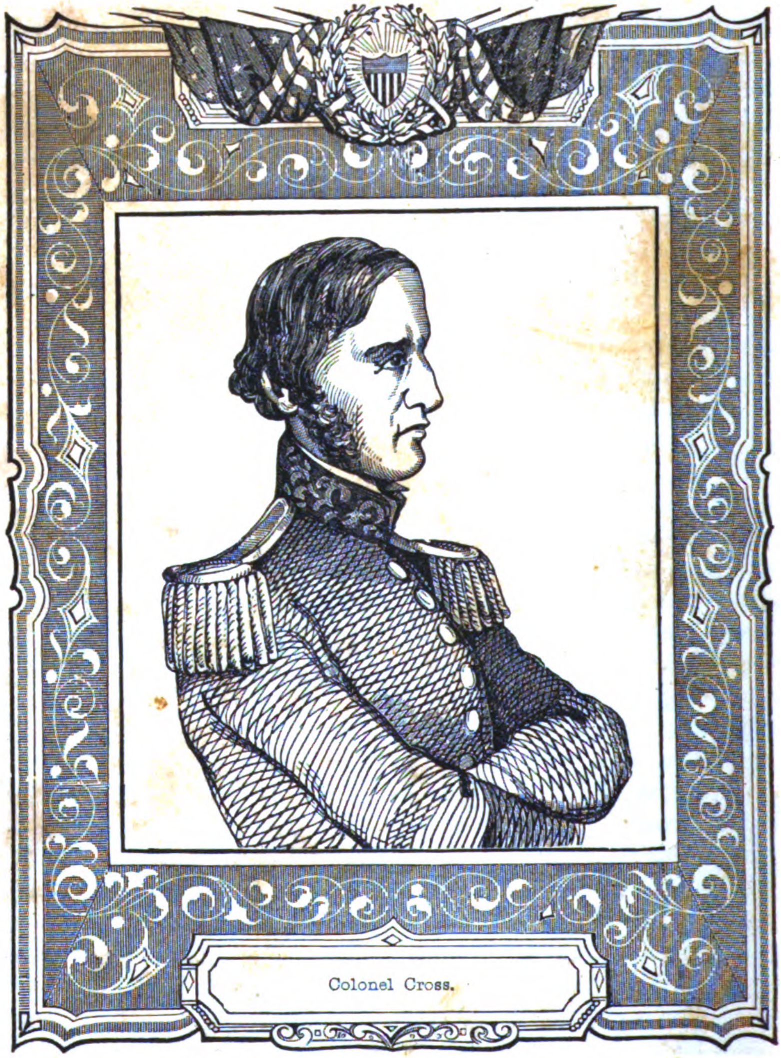
An alarming symptom now showed itself in the American camp. The men began to desert in considerable numbers, swimming the river to Matamoras, where they were kindly received. Orders were issued to shoot all who made the attempt, and these orders were strictly carried into execution. On the 4th of April, a deserter was shot dead in the water, and on the 5th another. Several followed the same night. One man, on the 8th, succeeded in reaching the opposite shore, but as he crawled out of the water, the sentinel fired, and he fell dead. He was immediately taken up and buried by the Mexicans. This shot, although from a musket, was at a distance of more than two hundred yards. Three slaves, belonging to officers, also ran away.



GENERAL AMPUDIA sought to increase desertions by the following address; he was at that time advancing to take command of Matamoras. It appears to have been distributed through a considerable portion of the American camp. It begins—"The commander-in-chief of the Mexican army to the English and Irish under the orders of the American General Taylor.

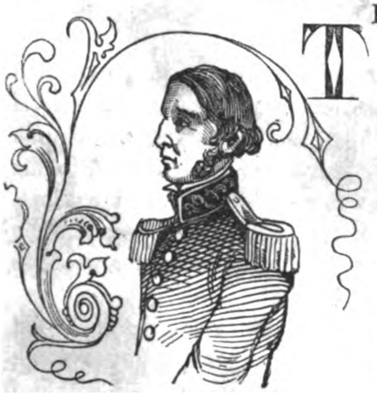
"Know ye:—That the government of the United States is committing repeated acts of barbarous aggression against the magnanimous Mexican nation; that the government which exists under the flag of the stars is unworthy the designation of Christian. Recollect that you were born in Great Britain; that the American government looks with coldness upon the powerful flag of St. George, and is provoking to a rupture the warlike people to which it belongs; President Polk boldly manifesting a desire to take possession of Oregon, as he has already done of Texas. Now then come with all confidence to the Mexican ranks, and I guarantee to you, upon my honour, good treatment, and that all your expenses shall be defrayed until your arrival in the beautiful capital of Mexico.

"Germans, French, Poles, and individuals of other nations! Separate yourselves from the Yankees, and do not contribute to defend a robbery and usurpation, which, be assured, the civilized nations of Europe look upon with the utmost indignation. Come, therefore, and array yourselves under the tri-coloured flag, in the confidence that



Colonel Cross.

the God of armies protects it, and that it will protect you equally with the English." This produced little effect.



THE 10th of April was signalized by the disappearance and subsequent death of Colonel Truemen Cross, "the first victim of the Mexican war." He was assistant quartermaster-general of the army of occupation, and highly popular with both officers and men. His custom was to ride out every morning for exercise and the benefit of his health, but his long absence on the 10th gave rise to painful suspicions, since the country was known to swarm with outlaws of the blackest character, who, for the sake of plunder, spared neither rank, age, or sex. As evening approached, parties were sent in search of him, cannon were fired to direct him, if lost, and other means taken to ascertain his fate. Letters were also addressed to the commandant of Matamoras, who, however, disclaimed all knowledge of the colonel's disappearance. Anxiety changed to fear, and fear to a settled belief of the worst. No intelligence was obtained until the 21st, when a straggler entered camp and reported that he knew where lay the body of an American officer. A party accompanied him to a small thicket, some distance from camp, where lay the mutilated remains of the ill-fated Cross.

The spot was at a short distance from the river. The body had been stripped, and the flesh afterwards torn off by vultures. It was recognized by portions of the clothes, the scalp, and teeth. The remains were brought to camp, and on the 25th General Taylor issued an order, passing a high eulogium on the deceased, and directing his funeral to take place on the following day, with military honours. The funeral escort consisted of a squadron of dragoons and eight companies of infantry, under Colonel Twiggs. The remains were buried near the river bank, in sight of both armies.

This event threw a gloom over the Americans, and excited strong feelings of vengeance against the Mexicans. But there is no reason to believe that the authorities in Matamoras had any knowledge of his murder. The account given by the straggler who brought the information of his remains, is probably the true one: that he had been attacked by the banditti band of Romano Falcon, and stripped of every thing except necessary clothing. The men were willing to spare his life, and carry him to Matamoras; but, during the dispute on the propriety of this step, Falcon killed the prisoner by a blow from the butt of his pistol, and afterwards drew the body into the bushes.

On the 11th of April, General Ampudia made his long expected entrance into Matamoras. The joyful inhabitants hailed his arrival by parading the troops, playing national music, ringing the church bells, and firing a salute of twenty guns. The event was, to the Americans, highly satisfactory, for it was generally believed that matters would take a definite complexion, either of peace or war. They were not disappointed. On the 12th, the new commander wrote to General Taylor as follows:

"To explain to you the many grounds for the just grievances felt by the Mexican nation, caused by the United States government, would be a loss of time, and an insult to your good sense; I, therefore, pass at once to such explanations as I consider of absolute necessity.

"Your government, in an incredible manner—you will even permit me to say an extravagant one, if the usage or general rules established and received among all civilized nations are regarded—has not only insulted, but has exasperated the Mexican nation, bearing its conquering banner to the Rio Bravo del Norte; and in this case, *by explicit and definite orders of my government*, which neither can, will, nor should receive new outrage, *I require you, in all form, and at latest in the peremptory term of twenty-four hours, to break up your camp and retire to the other bank of the river*, while our governments are regulating the pending question in relation to Texas.

"If you insist in remaining upon the soil of the department of Tamaulipas, *it will clearly result that arms, and arms alone, must decide the question;* and in that case, *I advise you that we accept the war to which*, with so much injustice on your part, *you provoke us*, and that, on our part, this war shall be conducted conformably to the principles established by the most civilized nations: that is to say, that the law of nations and of war shall be the guide of my operations; trusting, that, on your part, the same will be observed. With this view, I tender the consideration due to your person and respectable office."

General Taylor replied in the following language:

'I have had the honour to receive your note of this date, in which you summon me to withdraw the forces under my command from their present position, and beyond the river Nueces, until the pending question between our governments, relative to the limits of Texas, shall be settled. I need hardly advise you, that, charged as I am, in only a military capacity, with the performance of specific duties, I cannot enter into a discussion of the international question involved in the advance of the American army. You will, however, permit me to say that the government of the United States has constantly sought a settlement, by negotiation, of the question of boundary; that an envoy was despatched to Mexico for that purpose, and that, up to the most recent dates, said envoy had not been received by the actual Mexican government, if indeed he has not received his passports and left the republic. In the mean time, I have been ordered to occupy the country up to the left bank of the Rio Grande, until the boundary shall be definitely settled. In carrying out these instructions, I have carefully abstained from all acts of hostility, obeying in this regard, not only the letter of my instructions, but the plain dictates of justice and humanity.

"The instructions under which I am acting will not permit me to retrograde from the position I now occupy. In view of the relations between our respective governments, and the individual suffering which may result, I regret the alternative which you offer; but, at the same time, wish it understood that I shall by no means avoid such alternative, leaving the responsibility with those who rashly commence hostilities.

"In conclusion, you will permit me to give you the assurance, that, on my part, the laws and customs of war among civilized nations shall be carefully observed."

THE American commander was careful to prepare for the expected attack. On the reception of Ampudia's letter, the 1st brigade was moved to the right, and early on the following morning, (13th,) the 2d to the left, both out of range of the enemy's shot. At the same time Colonel Twiggs, with the dragoons and Ringgold's battery, occupied the centre, while the 3d brigade was moved into the interior of the field work, together with Bragg's and Duncan's batteries. In this position the 3d brigade was defiladed from the fires of the enemy, and the remainder formed a line so strong that the camp was considered impregnable. Simultaneously with these movements, and immediately afterwards, rumours reached camp that the enemy had crossed the river in large numbers below; in consequence of which the 4th infantry, 1st company of dragoons, and Ringgold's battery, were ordered to march immediately, and meet the train coming from Point Isabel. Captain Thornton was also despatched to ascertain the truth of the rumours. He returned without having seen the enemy, and about the same time the train reached the camp in safety.

On the 17th, the Americans lost another valuable officer, by an outrage similar to that which had occasioned the death of Cross. It will be remembered, that up to this time no intelligence of the colonel's fate had reached camp; but, from time to time, small parties were sent in quest of him. One of these was led by Lieutenant Dobbins of the 3d infantry, and Lieutenant Porter of the 4th, each having ten men and a non-commissioned officer. Besides their main object, they avowed the intention of capturing, if possible, the band of Romano Falcon. On the 18th, Lieutenant Porter's sergeant returned with a report that his superior had been killed; and on the day following, the sad story was confirmed. It appears that Lieutenant Dobbins had separated from Lieutenant Porter, with an understanding to meet him at a certain spot. About 2 P. M., on the 19th, the latter officer came up with a party of armed Mexicans engaged in jerking beef. While approaching their camp, a Mexican snapped his piece at Lieutenant Porter, who returned it with both barrels of his gun. The enemy immediately fled, and the lieutenant found himself in the possession of ten horses and twenty Mexican blankets. He immediately mounted his men, and proceeded towards the camp. By this time it had commenced raining violently. After proceeding a short distance, the party were attacked near a dense chaparral, by a number of Mexicans concealed among the thick bushes. One man was shot down, and the fire became so brisk, that the lieutenant ordered his men to dismount. His men's pieces had been rendered nearly useless by the rain; and in firing his own, both barrels snapped. While calling to a soldier to hand him a musket, he was shot in the left thigh, and fell. He exhorted his followers to fight on; but, being without available arms, they separated, and strayed towards the American camp. "During the fight, the enemy yelled like Indians. As soon as our men broke, they rushed upon the lieutenant and Flood. The latter they surrounded, and deliberately stabbed with their knives, and then despatched Lieutenant Porter in the same manner. Lieutenant Porter was the son of the late Commodore Porter, and entered the army in 1838. He was a gallant officer, and much esteemed in his regiment. His fate is truly deplorable. Two commands were sent out to seek for his body; but they found neither it, nor the spot where the fight took place. All parts of the country are so precisely similar, and destitute of landmarks, that it is almost an impossibility to return to any one spot."

ON the 22d, a correspondence took place between the two commanders, which is not only highly characteristic of each, but shows in what light each regarded the cause he was engaged in, and his own ability to support it. The subject is fully explained in the following despatch of Ampudia:

"From various sources worthy of confidence, I have learned that some vessels bound for the mouth of the river have not been able to effect an entrance into that port, in consequence of your orders that they should be conducted to Brazos Santiago.

"The cargo of one of them is composed in great part, and of the other entirely, of provisions which the contractors charged with providing for the army under my orders had procured to fulfil the obligations of their contracts.

"You have taken possession of these provisions by force, and against the will of the proprietors, one of whom is vice-consul of her Catholic majesty, and the other of her Britannic majesty; and whose rights, in place of being religiously respected, as was proffered, and as was to be hoped from the observance of the principles which govern among civilized nations, have, on the contrary, been violated in the most extraordinary manner, opposed to the guarantee and respect due to private property.

"Nothing can have authorized you in such a course. The commerce of nations is not suspended or interrupted, except in consequence of a solemn declaration of blockade, communicated and established in the form prescribed by international law. Nevertheless, you have infringed these rules, and, by an act which can never be viewed favourably to the United States government, have hindered the entrance to a Mexican port of vessels bound to it, under the confidence that commerce would not be interrupted. My duties do not allow me to consent to this new species of hostility, and they constrain me to require of you, not only that the vessels taken by force to Brazos Santiago, shall be at liberty to return to the mouth of the river, but the restoration of all the provisions which, besides belonging to private contractors, were destined for the troops on this frontier. I consider it useless to inculcate the justice of this demand, and the results which may follow an unlooked-for refusal.

"I have also understood that two Mexicans, carried down in a boat by the current of the river, near one of the advanced posts of your camp, were detained, after being fired upon, and that they are still kept and treated as prisoners. The individuals in question do not belong to the army, and this circumstance exempts them from the laws of war. I therefore hope, that you will place them absolutely at liberty, as I cannot be persuaded that you pretend to extend to persons not military the consequences of an invasion, which, without employing this means of rigour against unarmed citizens, is marked in itself with the seal of universal reprobation."

General Taylor answered as follows:

"I have had the honour to receive your communication of this date, in which you complain of certain measures adopted by my orders to close the mouth of the Rio Bravo against vessels bound to Matamoras, and in which you also advert to the case of two Mexicans supposed to be detained as prisoners in this camp.

"After all that has passed since the American army first approached the Rio Bravo, I am certainly surprised that you should complain of a measure which is no other than a natural result of a state of war so much insisted upon by the Mexican authorities as actually existing at this time. You will excuse me for recalling a few circumstances to show that this state of war has not been sought by the American army, but has been forced upon it, and that the exercise of the rights incident to such a state cannot be made a subject of complaint.

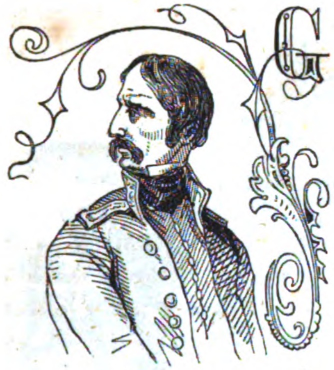
"On breaking up my camp at Corpus Christi, and moving forward with the army under my orders, to occupy the left bank of the Rio Bravo, it was my earnest desire to execute my instructions in a pacific manner; to observe the utmost regard for the personal rights of all citizens residing on the left bank of the river, and to take care that the religion and customs of the people should suffer no violation. With this view, and to quiet the minds of the inhabitants, I issued orders to the army, enjoining a strict observance of the rights and interests of all Mexicans residing on the river, and caused said orders to be translated into Spanish, and circulated in the several towns on the Bravo. These orders announced the spirit in which we proposed to occupy the country, and I am proud to say, that up to this moment the same spirit has controlled the operations of the army. On reaching the Arroyo Colorado, I was informed by a Mexican officer, that the order in question had been received in Matamoras; but was told at the same time that if I attempted to cross the river, it would be regarded as a declaration of war. Again, on my march to Frontone, I was met by a deputation of the civil authorities of Matamoras, protesting against my occupation of a portion of the department of Tamaulipas, and declaring that, if the army was not at once withdrawn, war would result. While this communication was in my hands, it was discovered that the village of Frontone had been set on fire and abandoned. I viewed this as a direct act of war, and informed the deputation that their communication would be answered by me when opposite Matamoras, which was done in respectful terms. On reaching the river, I despatched an officer, high in rank, to convey to the commanding general in Matamoras the expression of my desire for amicable relations, and my willingness to leave open to the use of the citizens of Matamoras the port of Brazos Santiago, until the question of boundary should be definitely settled. This officer received for reply, from the officer selected to confer with him, that my advance to the Rio Bravo was considered as a veritable act of war, and he was absolutely refused an interview with the American consul, in itself an act incompatible with a state of peace.

"Notwithstanding these repeated assurances on the part of the Mexican authorities, and notwithstanding the most obviously hostile preparations on the right bank of the river, accompanied by a rigid non-intercourse, I carefully abstained from any act of hostility, determined that the onus of producing an actual state of hostilities should not rest with me. Our relations remained in this state until I had the honour to receive your note of the 12th instant, in which you denounce war as an alternative of my remaining in this position. As I could not, under my instructions, recede from my position, I accepted the alternative you offered me, and made all my dispositions to meet it suitably. But, still willing to adopt milder measures before proceeding to others, I contented myself in the first instance with ordering a blockade of the mouth of the Rio Bravo by the naval forces under my orders—a proceeding perfectly consonant with the state of war so often declared to exist, and which you acknowledge in your note of the 16th instant, relative to the late Colonel Cross. If this measure seems oppressive, I wish it borne in mind that it has been forced upon me by the course you have seen fit to adopt. I have reported this blockade to my government, and shall not remove it until I receive instructions to that effect, unless indeed you desire an armistice pending the final settlement of the question between the governments, or until war shall be formally declared by either, in which case I shall cheerfully open the river. In regard to the consequences you mention as resulting from a refusal to remove the blockade, I beg you to understand that I am prepared for them, be they what they may.

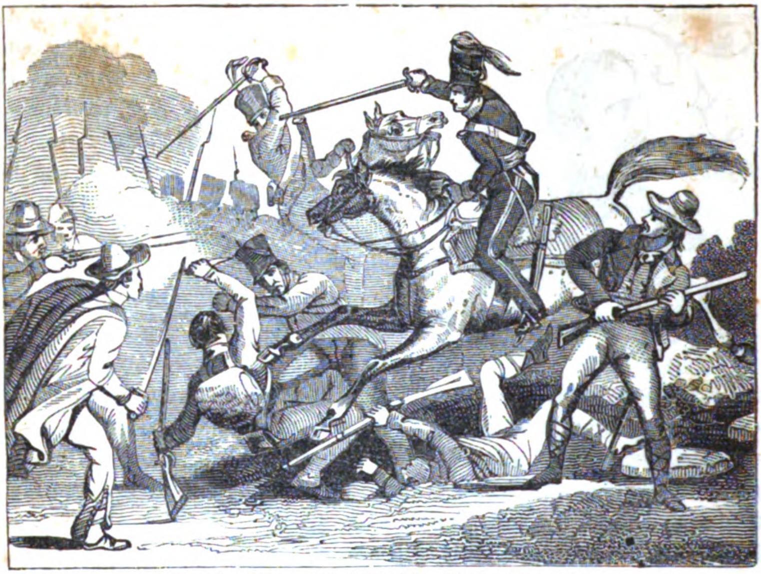
"In regard to the particular vessels referred to in your communication, I have the honour to advise you that, in pursuance of my orders, two American schooners, bound for Matamoras, were warned off on the 17th instant, when near the mouth of the river, and put to sea, returning probably to New Orleans. They were not seized, or their cargoes disturbed in any way, nor have they been in the harbour of Brazos Santiago to my knowledge. A Mexican schooner, understood to be the 'Juanita,' was in or off that harbour when my instructions to blockade the river were issued, but was driven to sea in a gale, since which time I have had no report concerning her. Since the receipt of your communication, I have learned that two persons, sent to the mouth of the river to procure information respecting this vessel, proceeded thence to Brazos Santiago, where they were taken up and detained by the officer in command, until my orders could be received. I shall order their immediate release. A letter from one of them to the Spanish vice-consul is respectfully transmitted herewith.

"In relation to the Mexicans said to have drifted down the river in a boat, and to be prisoners at this time in my camp, I have the pleasure to inform you that no such persons have been taken prisoners, or are now detained by my authority. The boat in question was carried down empty by the current of the river, and drifted ashore near one of our pickets, and was secured by the guard. Some time afterwards an attempt was made to recover the boat under the cover of the darkness; the individuals concerned were hailed by the guard, and, failing to answer, were fired upon as a matter of course. What became of them is not known, as no trace of them could be discovered on the following morning. The officer of the Mexican guard, directly opposite, was informed next day that the boat would be returned on proper application to me, and I have now only to repeat that assurance.

"In conclusion, I take leave to state that I consider the tone of your communication highly exceptionable, where you stigmatize the movement of the army under my orders as 'marked with the seal of universal reprobation.' You must be aware that such language is not respectful in itself, either to me or my government; and while I observe in my own correspondence the courtesy due to your high position, and to the magnitude of the interests with which we are respectively charged, I shall expect the same in return."



GENERAL ARISTA arrived in Matamoras on the 25th, and assumed command of the military force there. He communicated this fact to General Taylor in a note courteously worded, but acknowledging a state of war between the two countries, and a determination to prosecute it with vigour. During the same afternoon, an event occurred which displays the determination of the Mexicans to use every effort to retain what they considered their just possessions. Report reached the American camp that the enemy were crossing the river, both above and below; and to ascertain the truth of it, General Taylor despatched a dragoon party under Captain Ker, to the lower ford, and another to the upper, under Captain Thornton, accompanied by Captain Hardee, Lieutenants Kane and Mason, and sixty-one non-commissioned officers and privates. Captain Ker, on arriving at his destination, found no appearance of an enemy, and returned. Thornton's command proceeded up the Rio Grande about twenty-four miles, and as was supposed, to within about three miles of the Mexican camp, when the guide refused to go further, stating for his reason that the whole country was infested with Mexicans. The party, however, proceeded on about two miles, when they reached a farmhouse, entirely inclosed by a chaparral fence, with the exception of the portion bordering on the river. This was so boggy as to be impassable. Thornton entered the inclosure through a pair of bars, and rode towards the house, in order to gain some information from its inmates. His command followed. Suddenly a sharp firing was heard from the surrounding chaparral, and the Americans now perceived that they had been entrapped. Thickets seemed alive with armed soldiery, who are stated to have numbered twenty-five hundred. The captain did not lose his presence of mind, but wheeling his command, attempted to charge through the assailants, and pass out by the way he had entered; but this was found to be impracticable. At this juncture, Captain Hardee approached for the purpose of suggesting some plan of escape, when Thornton's horse, having received a shot, ran with him towards the chaparral fence, which he cleared with one leap, and then plunged towards a precipice. Here he fell, and the captain being underneath, remained insensible for five or six hours. He afterwards arose, and although both himself and the animal were much hurt, he succeeded in approaching within a few miles of

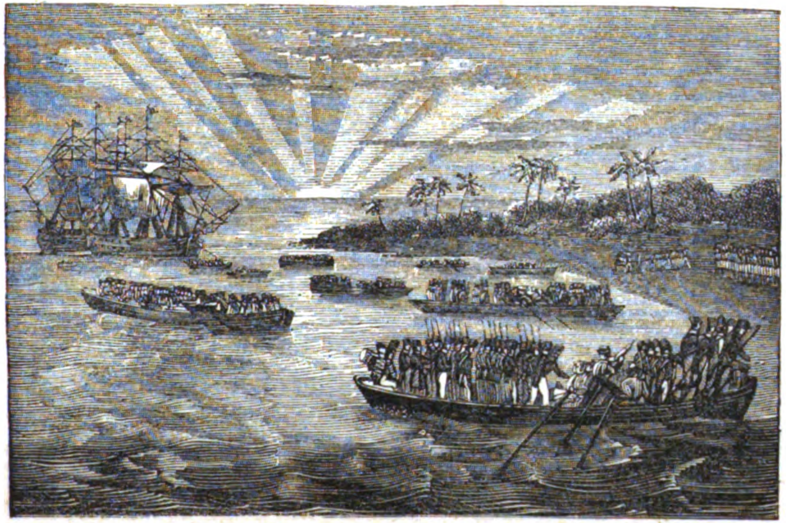


Captain Thornton's Skirmish with the Mexicans.

the camp. Here he was met by a party of Mexicans, and carried into Matamoras.

Meanwhile, Captain Hardee had assumed command of the party, and attempted to reach the river bank, and thence escape by swimming. But the marshy nature of the ground prevented this. He then determined to make all the resistance in his power, and, dismounting, he examined his men's weapons, and exhorted them to sell their lives as dearly as possible. While thus engaged, he was approached by a Mexican officer, who demanded a surrender. He answered that he would do so only on one condition—that of being treated as civilized nations treat prisoners of war. The officer bore this message to the commanding general, and returned with the assurance that the request should be granted. The surrender took place accordingly, and the prisoners were carried into Matamoras. Arista received them with respect, put them on half pay, and gave each a daily ration, or its equivalent in money. Captain Hardee, Lieutenant Kane, and the other officers lived with General Ampudia, and ate at his table.

In this affair, Lieutenant Mason, two sergeants, and eight privates were killed. The enemy were led by General Torrejon, and their success was mainly owing to the complete concealment afforded them by the thick chaparral, which rendered it impossible for an advancing force to perceive any ambuscade, however large. Notwithstand-



Troops landing at Point Isabel.

ing the great disparity of force, the Mexican general claimed it as a complete victory, and confidently looked forward to the final triumph of the Mexican arms.

Only a few days previous to Thornton's adventure, General Arista circulated a document among the foreigners of the American army, similar to that of Ampudia, but more artfully worded. Part of it reads as follows:

"It is to no purpose if they tell you that the law for the annexation of Texas justifies your occupation of the Rio Bravo del Norte; for by this act they rob us of a great part of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, Chihuahua, and New Mexico; and it is barbarous to send a handful of men on such an errand, against a powerful and warlike nation. Besides, the most of you are Europeans, and we are the declared friends of a majority of the nations of Europe. The North Americans are ambitious, overbearing, and insolent as a nation, and they will only make use of you as vile tools to carry out their abominable plans of pillage and rapine.

"I warn you in the name of justice, honour, and your own interests and self-respect, to abandon their desperate and unholy cause, and become peaceful Mexican citizens. I guarantee you in such case a half section of land, or three hundred and twenty acres to settle upon, gratis. Be wise, then, and just and honourable, and take no part in murdering us who have no unkind feelings for you. Lands shall be given to officers, sergeants, and corporals, according to rank, privates receiving three hundred and twenty acres as stated."

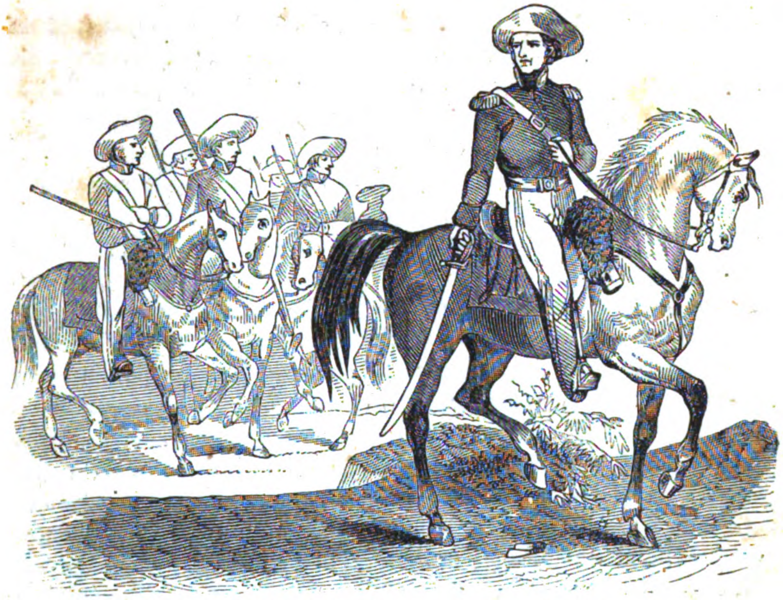
The enemy now crossed the river in large detachments, and spread themselves between the river fort and Point Isabel. The latter was in daily expectation of an attack. All communication with General Taylor was cut off, and the Americans prepared to meet the inevitable shock of arms with a cool and determined firmness worthy of the national character. Yet Major Munroe did not lose time in groundless apprehensions. As soon as his intercourse with General Taylor ceased, he began preparations for resisting any sudden attack, strengthening his regular force, by landing the officers and men on board the ships lying near the harbour.

The commanding general was in a similar situation. "Strong guards of foot," he writes, "and mounted men, are established on the margin of the river, and thus efficient means have been adopted on our part to prevent all intercourse. While opposite to us their pickets extend above and below for several miles, and we are equally active in keeping up a strong and vigilant guard, to prevent surprise, or attacks under disadvantageous circumstances. This is the more necessary whilst we have to act on the defensive, and they are at liberty to take the opposite course whenever they are disposed to do so. Nor have we been idle in other respects; we have a field-work under way, besides having erected a strong battery, and a number of buildings for the security of our supplies, in addition to some respectable works for their protection. We have mounted a respectable battery, two pieces of which are long eighteen-pounders, with which we could batter or burn down the city of Matamoras, should it become necessary to do so. When our field-work is completed, (which will soon be the case,) and mounted with its proper armament, five hundred men could hold it against as many thousand Mexicans. During the twenty-seven days since our arrival here, a most singular state of things has prevailed all through the outlines of the two armies, which, to a certain extent, have all the feelings as if there were actual war. Fronting each other for an extent of more than two miles, and within musket range, are batteries, shotted, and the officers and men, in many instances, waiting impatiently for orders to apply the matches, yet nothing has been done to provoke the firing of a gun, or any act of violence.

"Matamoras, at the distance we are now from it, appears to cover a large extent of ground, with some handsome buildings; but I would imagine the greater portion of them to be indifferent one-storied houses, with roofs of straw, and walls of mud or unburnt brick. During peace, the population is said to be five or six thousand, but it is now filled to overflowing with troops. Report says, from five to ten thousand, of all sorts, regular and militia.

"Since writing the above, an engagement has taken place between a detachment of our cavalry and the Mexicans, in which we were worsted. So the war has actually commenced."

While both stations were thus in momentary expectation of an attack, Captain Samuel Walker, with a small body of Texas rangers, reached Point Isabel. He was placed some distance west of the works, with orders to attempt the opening of a communication with General Taylor. His force was about seventy-five men, and with these he stationed himself in the open country. On the 28th, he advanced further towards the river, hoping to meet with an opportunity of effecting the desired communication. On the road he suddenly encountered a large body of Mexicans, whom he estimated to have numbered fifteen hundred. Notwithstanding the disparity of force, the captain determined to meet the threatened attack; and, placing his raw troops on the right, he ordered the whole command to take refuge in a neighbouring chaparral. Before these directions could be obeyed, the Mexicans opened their fire. This so frightened his new soldiers, that they broke and fled in confusion, and with the re-



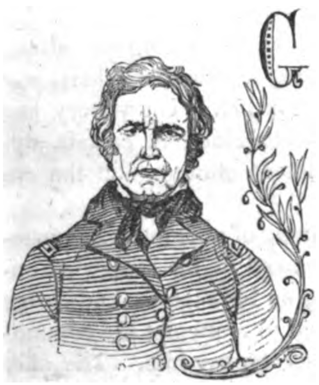
Captain Walker's Expedition on the 29th of April.

mainder Walker was unable to make a stand. During the retreat, most of his troops were scattered, and he, with a few others, was pursued to within cannon range of Point Isabel. The victory had not been altogether bloodless to the Mexicans, since the captain supposes that at least thirty fell during the fifteen minutes that the engagement lasted.

Although this affair proved the great danger of attempting any passage between the two camps, yet, undismayed by his somewhat unfavourable experience, and perhaps acting on his superior knowledge of Mexican character, Walker volunteered to reattempt the communication, should he obtain four men to accompany him. The offer was considered, by nearly all the garrison, as one of madness; but its very hopelessness acted as a charm to the daring spirits, who, by long association, knew well the captain's character. Six immediately volunteered, and succeeded in obtaining the major's sanction for the expedition. Walker and his little band started late on the 29th, and after passing many dangers, arrived safely at Taylor's position.

The situation of the American army was now very critical. The river fort was open to an attack from an overwhelming host, who would be aided by the simultaneous efforts of all the batteries in Matamoras. It seemed almost hopeless that a handful of men could bear up against such odds; but, even if this were the case, the enemy might still attain their object by a regular siege, there being, at tha time, but eight days' rations in camp. The country between Fort Brown and Point Isabel had been seized by a large force, and the latter was in hourly expectation of an attack. The Mexicans, by their rapid movements, and the continual influx of their troops at Matamoras, evinced a vigour and determination of resistance, that, to a great part of the American army, was totally unexpected.

Intelligence of this crisis reached the United States early in May. The consequences were alarming. Men who had never taken any interest in public affairs, forgot for awhile their business, to gather information from the army. Anxiety and fear, for the gallant men, whose fate seemed almost inevitable, increased to painful intensity. Every pulse of feeling beat in sympathy for Taylor and his comrades. Volunteers and citizens assembled in every city, eager to rush to the rescue of their countrymen. It was the season which, in every great war, precedes the test battle between the two nations; the movement on which hung the world's future estimation of our military character; the point which, once turned, no subsequent action of the war, not even such a battle as that of Buena Vista, the taking of Vera Cruz, nor the capture of Mexico itself, could reproduce.



GENERAL TAYLOR well knew that upon his conduct in this emergency depended in a great measure the spirit of the coming contest, as well as his own military credit. Three courses were before him, either to remain on the river and brave the enemy, while Major Munroe did the same, or to attempt the relief of Point Isabel; or, lastly, to abandon his position, and fall back into Texas. The latter was utterly untenable, and the former would in a few days reduce his men to starvation. There was then no honourable alternative, but marching to Point Isabel with a part of his force, and, after relieving it, to retrace his route to the river fort. The attempt would leave his little garrison on the river surrounded by overwhelming numbers, and could be made only with a superior enemy before and behind. It was a daring one—but the time for cautious alternatives had passed away.

On the 1st of May, at 4 o'clock P. M., General Taylor, with the main part of the army of occupation, left the river fort, in route for Point Isabel. He marched through the chaparral without meeting the enemy, and entering the broad rolling prairie, continued moving until midnight. Although the men were greatly fatigued, they were obliged to sleep under arms, without tents or fires. The march was resumed on the 2d, and the army, after suffering greatly from heat and want of water, reached Point Isabel at noon.

This march afforded opportunity for the long pending war storm to burst. The enemy fondly imagined that it had been occasioned by the fear of the American general, and the joy of both soldiery and citizens was extravagant and indecent. Opinions similar to the following, [from El Monitor Republicano, May 4th,] filled the papers of Matamoras:

"General Taylor dared not resist the valour and enthusiasm of the sons of Mexico. Well did he foresee the intrepidity with which our soldiers would rush against the usurpers of the national territory. Well did he know the many injuries which were to be avenged by those who had taken up arms, not to aggrandize themselves with the spoils of the property of others, but to maintain the independence of their country. Well did he know, we repeat it, that the Mexicans would be stopped neither by trenches, nor fortresses, nor large artillery. Thus it was that the chief of the American forces, frightened as soon as he perceived, from the situation and proximity of his camp, that our army was preparing to cross the river, left with precipitation for Point Isabel, with almost all his troops, eight pieces of artillery, and a few wagons. Their march was observed from our position, and the most excellent General D. Francisco Mejia immediately sent an express extraordinary to communicate the news to the most excellent general-in-chief. Here let me pay to our brave men the tribute which they deserve. The express verbally informed some troops which had not yet arrived at the ford, of the escape of the Americans; in one instant all the soldiers spontaneously crossed the river, almost racing one with another.

"Such was the ardour with which they crossed the river to attack the enemy. The terror and haste with which the latter fled to the fort, to shut themselves up in it and avoid a conflict, frustrated the active measures of the most excellent Senor General Arista, which were to order the cavalry to advance in the plain, and to cut off the flight of the fugitives. But it was not possible to do so, notwithstanding their forced march during the night. General Taylor left his camp at two o'clock in the afternoon, and, as fear has wings, he succeeded in shutting himself up in the fort. When our cavalry reached the point where they were to detain him, he had already passed and was several leagues ahead. Great was the sorrow of our brave men, not to have been able to meet the enemy face to face.

Their defeat was certain, and the main body of that invading army, who thought that they had inspired the Mexicans with so much respect, would have disappeared in the first important battle. But there was some fighting to be done, and the Americans do not know how to use other arms but those of duplicity and treachery. Why did they not remain with firmness under their colours? Why did they abandon the ground which they pretend to usurp with such iniquity? Thus has an honourable general kept his word. Had not General Taylor said in all his communications, that he was prepared to repel all hostilities? Why, then, does he fly in so cowardly a manner to shut himself up at the point? The commander-in-chief of the American army has covered himself with opprobrium and ignominy in sacrificing a part of his forces, whom he left in the fortifications, to save himself; for it is certain that he will not return to their assistance—not that he is ignorant of their peril, but he calculates that his would be greater if he had the temerity of attempting to resist the Mexican lances and bayonets in the open plain."

The American commander had left, at the river fort, the 7th regiment of infantry, Bragg's battery, Captain Lord with his company, and an eighteen-pound battery, the whole commanded by Major Jacob Brown. He was instructed to expend as little ammunition as possible, to fire the eighteen-pounders at regular intervals, in case of being surrounded, and on no account to attempt offensive operations.

Before daylight of May 3d, a battery of seven guns, stationed at Matamoras, began a steady cannonade upon the American works. The garrison were soon in a condition for resisting, and in a few moments the eighteen-pounders were driving their heavy masses into the heart of the city. This continued a quarter of an hour, when the Mexican guns ceased, and were succeeded by volleys of shells and shot from a fort below Matamoras. This was afterwards joined by a mortar battery, and the connonade continued, with but little interruption, until night. An American officer, speaking of this first day's attack, says:—"My station being in one of the batteries opposite the fort, I could sometimes hear the shot crashing through the houses. Our guns stopped firing about ten or eleven o'clock, as we were only wasting our ammunition, and did but little injury, except to the town. They kept on firing through the day and part of the night, but have done us little injury, one man only being killed. They have a mortar, and annoy us considerably with their shells, several of which have exploded in the fort, but with no serious injury. We are hourly expecting an attack from their forces, and are prepared to make a vigorous defence."

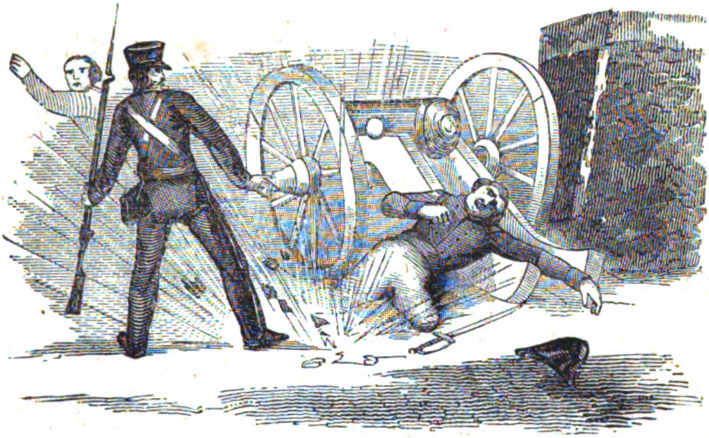
The Mexicans gave their own version of this affair. The silence of the American guns was construed into the result of fear, and the annihilation of the invading army was triumphantly predicted. The journal formerly quoted, says:

"The enemy, in their impotent rage, and before they concealed their shame behind the most distant parapets, had the barbarous pleasure of aiming their guns towards the city to destroy its edifices, as it was not in their power to destroy the fortifications from which they received so much injury. This wicked revenge, which only springs from cowardly and miserable souls, did not meet with the success expected by those who so unworthily adorn themselves with the title of *savants* and philanthropists. Their stupidity was equal to their wickedness. Almost all the balls passed too high; and those which touched the houses, although they were eighteen-pounders, did not cause any other mischief but that of piercing one or two walls. If those who conceived the infamous design of destroying Matamoras had seen the contemptuous laughter with which the owners of those houses showed their indifference for the losses which they might sustain, they would have admired the patriotism and disinterestedness of the Mexicans, always ready to undergo the greatest sacrifices, when it is necessary to maintain their nationality and independence. The glorious 3d of May is another brilliant testimony of this truth; through the thickest of the firing, one could remark the most ardent enthusiasm on all faces, and hardly had a ball fallen, when even the children would look for it, without fearing that another aimed in the same manner should fall in the same place. That, we saw ourselves, in the public square, where a multitude of citizens were assembled.

"The triumph of our arms has been complete; and we have only to lament the loss of a sergeant and two artillerymen, who fell gloriously in fighting for their country. The families of those victims ought to be taken care of by the supreme government, to whose paternal gratitude they have been recommended by the most excellent senor general-in-chief. We must also be consoled by the thought, that the blood of these brave men has been revenged by their bereaved companions. As many of our balls passed through the embrasure, the loss to the Americans must be very great; and, although we do not know exactly the number of their dead, the most accurate information makes it amount to fifty-six. It is probable that such is the case. Since eleven o'clock in the morning, the abandonment of their guns, merely because two of them were dismounted, and the others were uncovered; the panic-terror with which, in all haste, they took refuge in their furthest intrenchments, taking away from the camp all that could suffer from the attack of our artillery; the destruction which must have been occasioned by the bombs, so well aimed, that some would burst at a yard's distance from the ground, in their descent to the point at which they were to fall; every thing contributes to persuade that, indeed, the enemy have suffered a terrible loss. If it were not the case, if they preserved some remnant of valour, why did they not dare to repair their fortifications in the night? It is true that, from time to time, a few guns were fired on them in the night, but their aim could not be certain, and cowardice alone could force them not to put themselves in an attitude to return the fire which was poured on them again at daylight. No American put out his head; silence reigned in their camp; and for this reason we have suspended our fire to-day—that there is no enemy to meet our batteries."

A little before three o'clock, A.M., of the 4th, a small party appeared before the fort, and on being hailed, announced themselves as "Captain Walker and friends from Frontone," [Point Isabel.] They were admitted, and the captain delivered to the commandant some despatches from General Taylor; but although he was anxious to return, it was found impossible to do so during the day. The enemy did not renew their fire until the 5th, an interval which the Americans improved by finishing the defences of their fort, and providing, as much as possible, against the effects of the hostile batteries. Daylight of the morning following, disclosed a new battery, in a field east of the Rio Grande; and during the whole of that day troops concentrated around and near it. The Americans expected an assault, especially as the army in Matamoras appeared to be uncommonly active. In the afternoon, the new battery, together with those in Matamoras, opened upon the garrison, who answered, with the six-pound howitzers. The enemy, however, evidently meditated an assault, since they soon ceased firing, and commenced hovering before the works, as though selecting a point of attack. While this was going on, Lieutenant Hanson obtained the major's permission to sally into the country, with a small party, in order to reconnoiter. His manœuverings soon attracted the notice of the Mexicans, who made several attempts to surround and cut him off; but he completed his intended observations, escaped his opponents, and returned to the fort. The enemy then spread themselves so as completely to surround the Americans; and Major Brown ordered his signal guns to be fired, in order to apprize General Taylor of his being besieged.

Before daylight of the 6th, all the Mexican batteries were in full blast, and red hot shells and shot poured into the fort in one uninterrupted stream. The Americans did not reply, on account of the small quantity of ammunition, which it was their desire to retain, in order to meet the expected assault. At ten o'clock, the major, while superintending some new defences, was struck by a cannon shot,



Major Brown mortally wounded.

which tore away a portion of his right leg, and rendered amputation necessary. He was carried to a small bomb-proof, and lived long enough to hear the report of his general's cannon at Resaca de la Palma. His loss was at that time severely felt; and General Taylor, in noticing his noble defence of the fort, has the following language: "The field-work opposite Matamoras has sustained itself handsomely during a cannonade and bombardment of one hundred and sixty hours. But the pleasure is alloyed with profound regret at the loss of its heroic and indomitable commander, Major Brown, who died to-day from the effects of a shell. His loss would be a severe one to the service at any time, but to the army under my orders, it is indeed irreparable." In consequence of this accident, the command of the fort devolved on Captain Hawkins.

The fire from the hostile batteries continued until noon, when it ceased for two hours. A dull fire then commenced from a single battery, during which, parties of the enemy approached near enough to be fired upon by the garrison. The firing continued until five o'clock, when the Mexicans sounded a parley, and two officers approached the fort, bearing a white flag. They were met by Major Sewell and Lieutenant Britton, and delivered the following message from General Arista:

"You are besieged by forces sufficient to take you, and there is, moreover, a numerous division encamped near you, which, free from other cares, will keep off any succours which you may expect to receive.

"The respect for humanity acknowledged at the present age by all civilized nations, doubtless imposes upon me the duty of mitigating the disasters of war.

"This principle, which Mexicans observe above all other nations, obliges me to summon you, as all your efforts will be useless, to surrender, in order to avoid, by a capitulation, the entire destruction of all the soldiers under your command.

"You will thus afford me the pleasure of complying with the mild and benevolent wishes above expressed, which distinguish the character of my countrymen, whilst I at the same time fulfil the most imperious of the duties which my country requires for the offences committed against it."

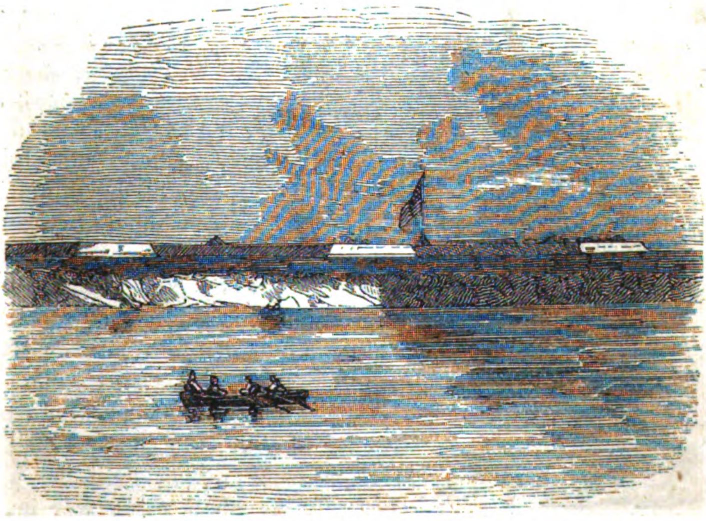
Some difficulty was experienced by the captain in translating this paper, owing to his interpreter's scanty knowledge of Spanish; but its meaning being understood, he called a council of officers, and asked the opinion of each, beginning at the youngest. They unanimously resolved to defend the place to the last extremity. In a short time Captain Hawkins sent the following answer:

"Sir—Your humane communication has just been received, and after the consideration due to its importance, I must respectfully decline to surrender my forces to you.

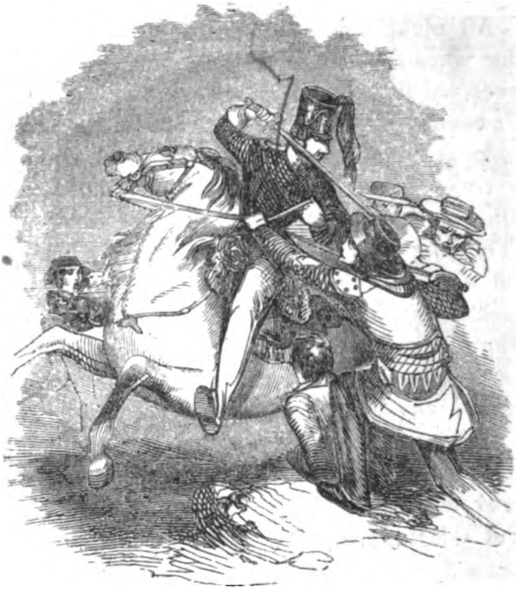
"The exact purport of your despatch I cannot feel confident that I understand, as my interpreter is not skilled in your language; but if I have understood you correctly, you have my reply above."

On the reception of this reply, Arista opened his batteries with more activity than before; and during this and the following day the cannonade continued. On the evening of the 7th, Captain Mansfield and a few others were sent to the plain to level a traverse formerly erected by the Americans, and which now afforded protection to the enemy. This he accomplished, and succeeded in returning without being attacked. The Americans passed the night expecting every moment an attack. At twelve o'clock, the sound of bugles, and firing of muskets, aroused the garrison, and each man was ordered to his post. No attack was made, and they passed the day as they had done others, until late in the afternoon, when a heavy cannonade was heard in the direction of Point Isabel. All knew whence it proceeded—that General Taylor had met the enemy, and was now striving against immense odds. In the excitement, military order was forgotten, and leaping on the parapets, amid the thick shot of the enemy, the officers sent up one deafening shout, that echoed up and down the shores of the Bravo. Then with painful anxiety, each one listened for a repetition, and as the noise of the tumult grew louder and louder, each one's feelings were wound up to the highest pitch. Toward evening a Mexican deserter reached the fort, and reported that General Taylor had had an engagement with Arista, at Palo Alto. All night the soldiers were in a state of restless excitement; so that when the cannonade from Matamoras was renewed on the 9th, it received little attention. Late in the afternoon of that day, the general's cannon were again heard, and before sunset, masses of fugitives broke through the adjacent chaparral, and dashed madly toward the river. Then the last sound of cannon died within the city, and following it, arose one wild shout of victory from the little garrison. The long guns of the fort were turned upon the crowd of fugitives, but with little effect.

The defence of Fort Brown is one of the most glorious achievements performed during the Mexican war. It should be remembered that at that time the courage of the enemy had not been tested, and an American would advance to engage a superior foe, with much less grounds of confidence than after he had, by a number of battles, proved himself invincible. Major Brown had but one infantry company, and was deficient in provisions, ammunition, tents, and conveniences. Yet this little handful toiled bravely on, night and day, for more than a week against entire armies, and even after the loss of their commander; and from them Mexico was taught that she had to deal with such a foe as she had never encountered before.



Fort Brown.



CHAPTER XI.

BATTLE OF PALO ALTO.

GENERAL TAYLOR, as has been mentioned, reached Point Isabel on the day after his departure from the river fort, without having seen the enemy. This was to him somewhat unexpected, and it convinced him that the first attack would be made upon the fort, opposite Matamoras. The opinion was soon confirmed. Before reveille, on the morning of May 3d, the heavy sound of cannon came rolling from the west. Instantly the whole camp was in excitement, each one eager to march to the relief of his comrades. About the same time, Captain Walker, who had been on a scout the

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preceding evening, returned and reported the enemy encamped in the country in great force, and evidently awaiting the return of the Americans. He had fallen in with their picket guard and fired upon it.

On receiving this news, General Taylor determined to march to the relief of the fort, and issued orders for the troops to march at one o'clock; but he subsequently changed his mind and decided on communicating with the garrison. Captain Walker was selected for this dangerous service. Captain May, with about one hundred dragoons including ten rangers, formed an escort. The latter were to proceed towards the river fort, and on reaching the chaparral near it, to conceal themselves, until Walker could visit the fort and return. They started late in the afternoon, and at nine o'clock came in sight of the enemy's camp-fires at Palo Alto. May eluded observation, passed round the entire circuit of the Mexican camp, and arrived within seven miles of the river fort. Here he concealed his men, while Captain Walker, with the ten rangers, rode towards the fort. As has already been stated, the latter officer was unable to return until the following night; so that May, supposing he had been captured, set out at daylight on a full gallop for Point Isabel. When within twelve miles of it, he met and charged one hundred and fifty lancers, pursuing them three miles. He reached the point at nine o'clock.

The supposed fate of young Walker excited considerable sensation among the soldiers, he being a universal favourite. But, to the great joy of all, he returned on the 5th, bringing with him the gratifying intelligence that all was well at the fort. He had passed through numerous dangers in returning, as the enemy were aware of his movements, and had sent out numerous parties to intercept him. Nothing but his intimate knowledge of the road, and admirable presence of mind, could have enabled him to escape them.

General Taylor now resolved to march to the assistance of the fort, and during the whole of the 6th, the soldiers were preparing for the movement. On the 7th, the commander issued the following characteristic order:

"The army will march to-day, at three o'clock, in the direction of Matamoras. It is known the enemy has recently occupied the route in force. If still in possession, the general will give him battle. The commanding general has every confidence in his officers and men. If his orders and instructions are carried out, he has no doubt of the result, let the enemy meet him in what numbers they may He wishes to enjoin upon the battalions of infantry, that their main dependence must be in the bayonet."

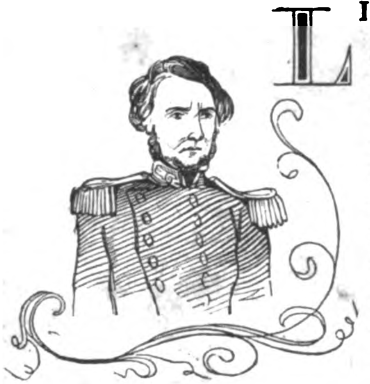
Soldiers Drinking.

At three o'clock, P. M., the army commenced its march, accompanied by a large train, rich both in provisions and munitions of war. In the wagons were six twelve-pounders, and an additional battery of two eighteen-pounders was placed under the command of Lieutenant Churchill, of the artillery. The march across the lonely prairie presented a singular and noble appearance. Long files of troops, in exact order, the flying artillery, heavy trains, wagons slowly moving by sluggish oxen, contrasting with the pomp and glitter of military array, all formed a picture never before witnessed by the wilds of Texas. After proceeding five miles, the army halted and encamped for the night.

On the morning of the 8th, at an early hour, Captain Walker and his scouts reported the camp of the enemy deserted. The general supposed that they were retreating in order to avoid battle; but this opinion proved incorrect. The march being resumed soon after sunrise, the troops reached some thick mesquite and chaparral thickets, in emerging from which, the Mexican army broke upon their view, drawn up in battle array, and presenting a front of nearly a mile and a half. The sight filled each soldier with enthusiasm. Instead, however, of leading them directly to the attack, the general deliberately formed them into columns, and then, grounding arms, permitted them to go, half at a time, to some neighbouring pools, to refresh themselves, and fill their canteens. During this interval, a daring feat was performed by an American officer, Lieutenant Blake. The account we give, with some little alteration, from one who shared the adventure.

"After the line of battle had been formed, General Taylor rode along it to survey the command. Every man was perfectly cool. At this time the general did not know whether the enemy had any artillery or not, as the long grass prairie prevented him from distinguishing it, when masked by men in front of the pieces. To obtain this knowledge was an all-important point, and Captain May was ordered to go forward with his squadron, reconnoiter the enemy, and, if possible, draw a fire from their artillery. He accordingly advanced; but the enemy appeared to take no notice of him. Lieutenant Blake then proposed to go forward alone, and reconnoiter. I was close to him," says our authority, "and volunteered to accompany him. He consented, and we dashed forward to within eighty yards of their line, the whole army looking on us with astonishment. Here we had a full view. The lieutenant alighted from his horse, and, with his glass, surveyed the whole line, and handed it to me. After making a similar observation, I returned the glass. Just then two officers rode out toward us. I mentioned it to Blake, and requested him to mount. He quietly told me to draw a pistol on them. I did so, and they halted. Had they thought proper, they could have fired a volley from their main line, and riddled us both. We then galloped along the line to its other end, there examined them again, and returned." The lieutenant reported accurately the entire artillery force of the enemy.

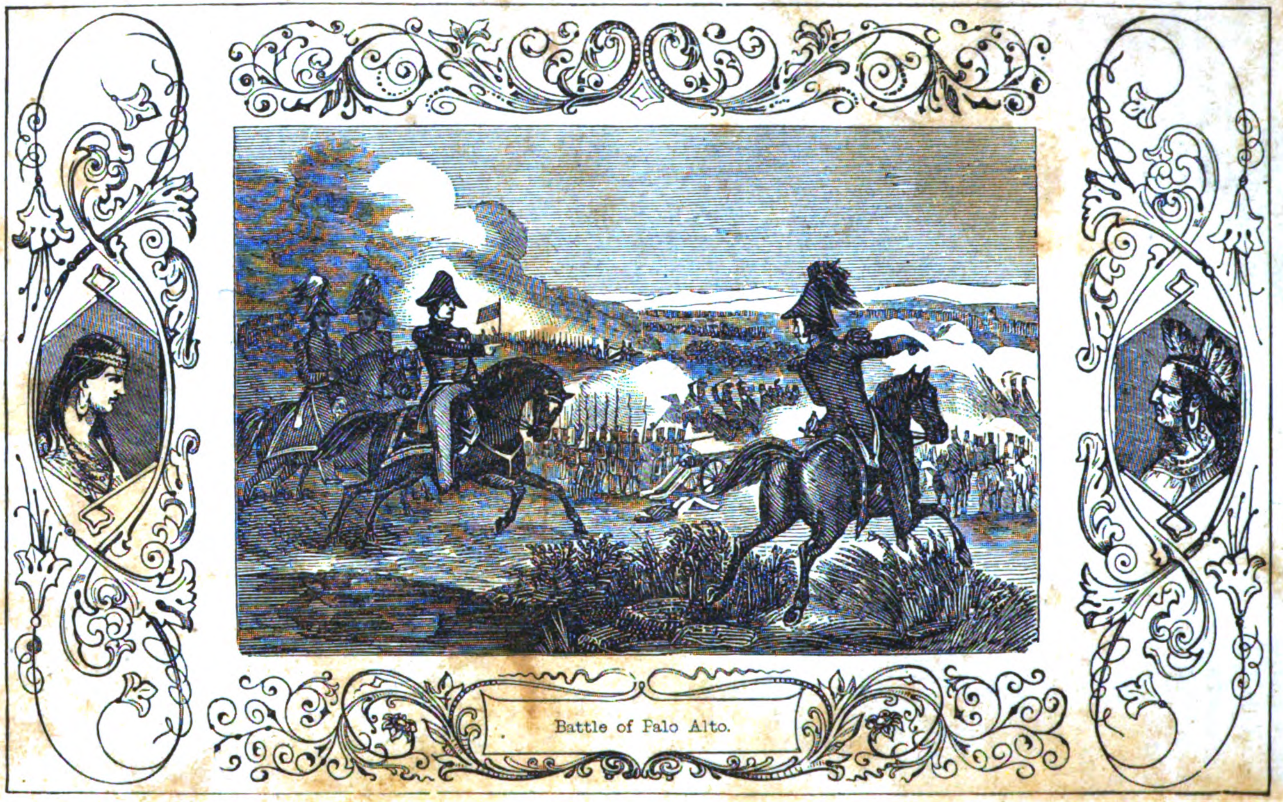
Before this reconnoissance was completed, the army had commenced its march in the following order: On the extreme right, the 5th infantry, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel McIntosh; Major Ringgold's artillery; 3d infantry, commanded by Captain L. M. Morris; two eighteen-pounders, under Lieutenant Churchill, 3d artillery; 4th infantry, commanded by Major G. W. Allen; the 3d and 4th regiments composed the 3d brigade, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, and all the above corps, together with two squadrons of dragoons, under Captains Ker and May, composed the right wing, under the orders of Colonel Twiggs. The left was formed by the battalion of artillery commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Childs, Captain Duncan's light battery, and the 8th infantry, under Captain Montgomery, all forming the 1st brigade, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Belknap. The train was parked near the water, under direction of Captains Crossman and Myers, and protected by Captain Ker's squadron.



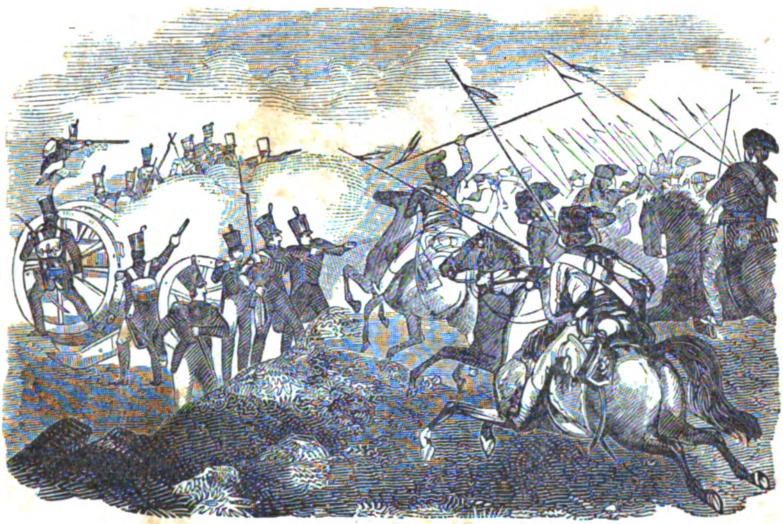
LIEUTENANT BLAKE had scarcely joined the army when the enemy opened their batteries, which were immediately answered by all the American artillery. The Mexican fire was increased by one gun after another, until their whole line was in an entire blaze, and the battle ground was enveloped in clouds of smoke. Both armies had resolved on victory, and both behaved in a manner which showed that they deserved it. But, unfortunately for the Mexicans, they aimed many of their pieces too high, and pointed others at their opponents' guns instead of their men. Their first fire, therefore, did little execution; while Ringgold's and Churchill's artillery soon dispersed the cavalry proceeding against them, and Captain Duncan mowed down scores of their infantry. Captain May's squadron of dragoons supported the latter.

After the artillery had led the battle for some time, about one thousand Mexican cavalry, with two field-pieces, were observed moving through the chaparral on the American right, either to attack that flank, or to make an attempt upon the train. The 5th infantry, being detached to repel this movement, threw themselves into squares, and firmly waited an attack. They were supported by Lieutenant Ridgely, with a section of Ringgold's artillery, and Captain Walker's company of volunteers. The enemy rushed on in one dense mass; but soon the artillery was ploughing through their ranks, crushing man and horse beneath its powerful track, and overwhelming the survivors in utter confusion. With terrible grandeur the battle was now raging over the entire field; companies were wheeling and manœuvering; cavalry charging; artillery galloping from point to point; while amid the confused din of cannon, and shouts, and trampling steeds, was heard occasionally the wailings of the wounded, or deep groans of the dying.

The continued discharges of artillery fired the grass of the prairie, which was, at that season, as dry as chaff. The flame, small at first, spread rapidly on every side, until sheets of fire, accompanied by thick smoke, shot along the surface, and at length, growing fiercer as it continued, the whole space between the two armies was covered by one wide ocean of fire, that went tossing and roaring up to heaven.

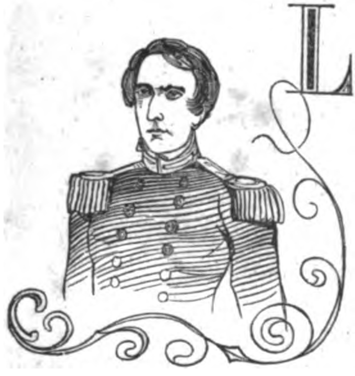


Battle of Palo Alto.



Repulse of the Mexican Cavalry at Palo Alto.

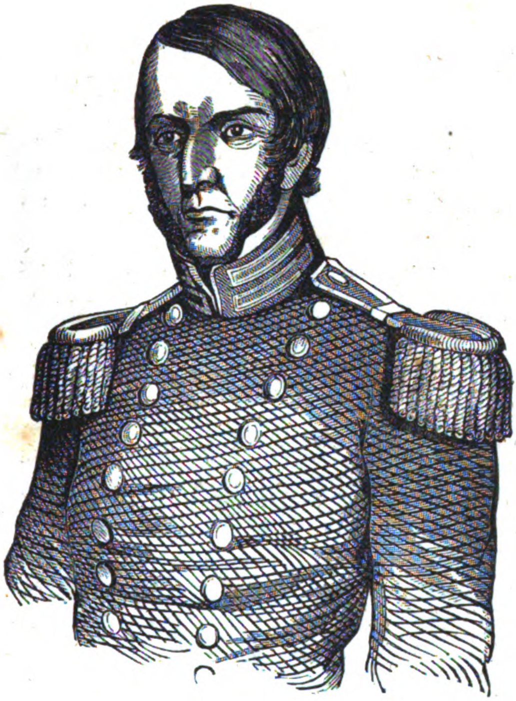
The sounds of strife were lost, and both armies suspended the work of death. General Taylor availed himself of the interval by forming a new line. The eighteen-pounders were ordered to the position first occupied by the Mexican cavalry, while the 1st brigade occupied a new position to the left of the battery. The 5th was advanced from its former position, and occupied a point on the extreme right of the new line. Meanwhile the enemy had made a similar change of position, and after the lapse of an hour the action recommenced. In a little time the fire from the American guns grew most destructive. But, although long openings were made in their ranks at every discharge, yet they sustained the severe cannonade with a constancy that astonished their antagonists. May's squadron was despatched to make a demonstration on their left; but, the ground being unfavourable to the movements of cavalry, the captain suffered considerably from the enemy's artillery, without effecting his object. The 4th infantry, which had been ordered to support the eighteen-pound battery, was also exposed to a galling fire, by which several men were killed, and Captain Page was severely wounded. But the enemy's principal efforts were directed against the eighteen-pounders, and the guns under Major Ringgold. Round these swept a storm of iron hail, which picked off the men one by one, and rattled fearfully along the American cannon. Here Ringgold received his death wound. He was mounted at the time, and the shot struck him at right angles, entering the right thigh, passing through the holsters and upper part of the shoulders of his horse, and then striking the left thigh in the same line. A large mass of muscles and integuments were carried away from each thigh, but the arteries were not divided, nor the bones broken. During the whole day he had managed his artillery in a masterly manner, directing his shot not only to groups and masses of the enemy, but even to particular men. He saw them fall, their places occupied by others, and they in turn shot down, as he still pointed his guns to the same place, feeling as confident of his mark as though using a rifle.



LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CHILDS'S battalion moved up to support the artillery on the right. It was followed by a strong body of cavalry, which, notwithstanding a severe fire from the eighteen-pounders, prepared to charge. The battalion was formed in square, in order to meet the attack; but when the advancing squadrons were within close range, a fire of canister was opened upon them with withering effect, and soon they were in full retreat. A brisk fire of small arms was now opened upon the square, by which Lieutenant Luther was wounded; but a well-directed fire from the front of the square silenced all further opposition in that quarter.

While these events were transpiring on the right, the Mexicans had made a serious attempt against the American left. Lieutenant Duncan met this by a masterly movement, which largely contributed to the final success. Under cover of the smoke, he moved rapidly round to the enemy's right, and then, suddenly unlimbering, poured in a galling enfilade fire upon their flank. Shells and shrapnell shot told with murderous effect, and in an instant the enemy's masses were in disorder. A charge of cavalry at this moment would have swept the whole field; but, as such a movement would have endangered the train, the American general wisely forebore. As night approached, the fire of the enemy slackened, and it ceased on both sides with the setting of the sun. The Americans lay all night upon their arms, on nearly the same position that the enemy had occupied in the morning.

The total force of the Americans in the battle of Palo Alto was two thousand two hundred and eighty-eight, including one hundred and seven officers, but a portion of this force took no part in the battle. The loss was nine killed, forty-four wounded, and two miss-



Major Ringgold.

ing. The force of the Mexicans, according to the statements of their own officers, was not less than six thousand regular troops, with a large irregular force, and ten pieces of artillery. "Their loss," says General Taylor, "was not less than two hundred killed, and four hundred wounded—probably greater. This estimate is very moderate, and formed upon the number actually counted on the field, and upon the reports of their own officers."*

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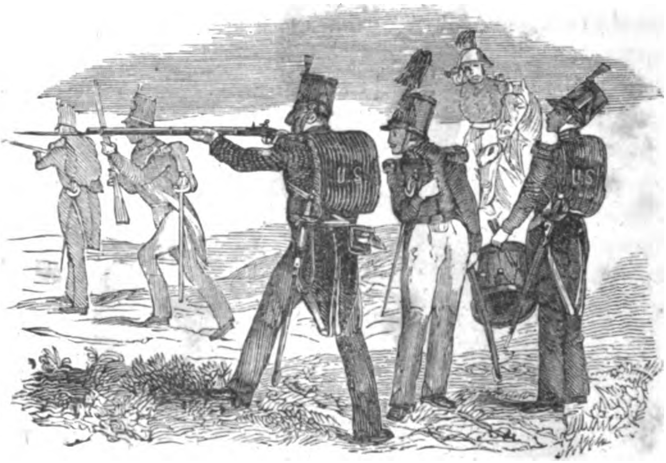
* The havoc committed by our artillerists, amid the densely crowded masses of the enemy was indeed terrible. When the Americans passed the battle-field on the 9th, they found heaps and groups lying piled upon each other, in every imaginable position, and mangled in every possible manner. The prairie was in many places dyed with streams of blood for several yards, and where the grass had been burnt, carcasses of men and horses blackened with fire and blood caused the hearts of the victors to recoil within them. The efficiency of the flying artillery, so remarkably shown in these battles of the 8th and 9th of May, became more and more conspicuous in the subsequent actions of the war. Major Ringgold, who fell at the battle of Palo Alto, is entitled to the perpetual remembrance and gratitude of his countrymen, for his exertions in contributing to bring this efficient arm of the service into so high a state of discipline.



CHAPTER XII.

BATTLE OF RESACA DE LA PALMA.

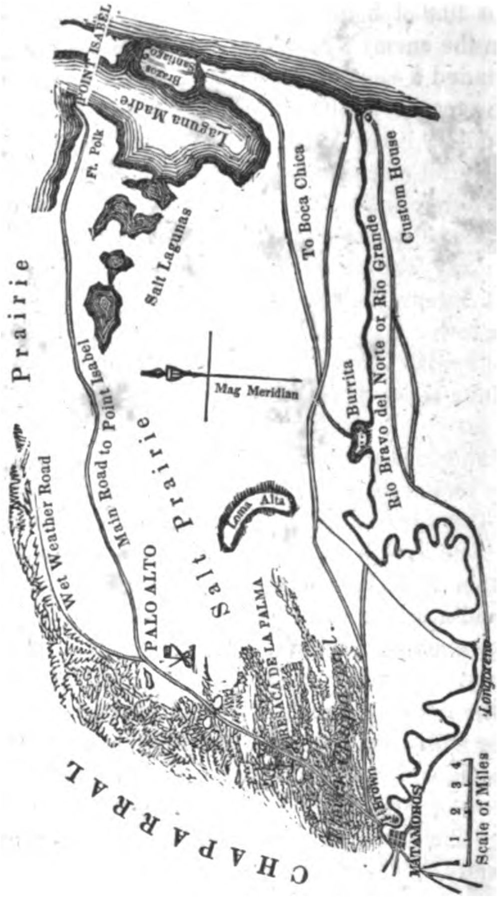
DURING the night the two armies slept quietly, almost in sight of each other. The night was serene and beautiful, the moon casting a soft light on every thing around; and but for the groans of the wounded, and the screams of those suffering under the knife of the surgeon, no one could have imagined the scenes which had occurred during the day. The first care of General Taylor was to visit the wounded, and see that every comfort was supplied. But the constant and well-directed exertions of the medical department left him but little to do—every one, whether officer or soldier, having been attended to with unwavering care and watchfulness.

A council of officers, held at night on the battle-field, having decided to go forward, General Taylor, early on the morning of the

9th, formed his line of battle and moved forward. Far in the distance was seen the enemy's host, moving slowly towards the chaparral which bounded a view of the eastern horizon. As the soldiers moved over the recent battle-field, many an eye was pained at the spectacles of misery lying thickly around. Where the artillery had performed its fearful office, men and horses shattered and mutilated, were lying thickly piled upon each other. The wolf and the vulture were revelling upon them, with whose screams were mingled the groans of many who through the whole night had writhed and moaned in the intensity of suffering. Arms, trappings, provisions, and clothing, strewed the field; the prairie was red with blood; and many a gallant spirit, whom the shock of battle could not daunt, felt sick and childlike as he gazed upon the wounded and dying on the field of battle.

On approaching the chaparral, General Taylor became convinced that the enemy had occupied it in force. Another battle seemed inevitable; and to prepare for it the commander halted his troops near a convenient watering-place, where they were allowed a season of repose. Captain McCall, with some light companies under Captain C. F. Smith, and a select detachment, was ordered to advance and reconnoiter the enemy's position. They numbered about two hundred and twenty. Captain McCall, with the artillery and infantry, moved along the left of the road, Captain Smith on the right, while Captain Walker with some rangers was thrown in advance, and Lieutenant Pleasanton, with the 2d dragoons, brought up the rear. Walker charged a party of Mexicans, killing one and capturing another. McCall entered the chaparral, and perceived other parties of infantry with some cavalry. These were fired upon by Captain Smith. On reaching the borders of a ravine, known as Resaca de la Palma, Captain McCall was met by a discharge from a concealed battery, which killed or wounded three of his men, and drove the remainder into the thicket. At the same time Lieutenant Dobbins was charged by some cavalry, and fired upon from the battery, and after a slight skirmish his men were defeated. McCall now collected his command, and placing them in a strong position, sent three dragoons to inform General Taylor that the enemy were in front.

The position chosen by the enemy for the second day's battle was a most admirable one for defensive warfare. The ravine known as Resaca de la Palma, is nearly two hundred feet wide, and four feet deep. It is crossed at right angles, by the road to Matamoras. The ridges on each side are covered with dense rows of chaparral, utterly impenetrable to horse, and defying every weapon save the bayonet. In the thicket nearest the Americans, as well as in the ravine below,


POINT ISABEL
Brazos Santiago
Laguna Madre
Ft. Polk
Prairie
Salt Lagunas
To Boca Chica
Custom House
Rio Bravo del Norte or Rio Grande
Burrita
Mag Meridian
Main Road to Point Isabel
Wet Weather Road
Salt Prairie
Loma Alta
PALO ALTO
RESACA DE LA PALMA
Chaparral
Longoreno
Ft. Brown
MATAMOROS
1 2 3 4
Scale of Miles
CHAPARRAL

Battle-grounds of Palo Alto, and Resaca de la Palma.

the enemy lay in double rows; and another line of them extended through the chaparral on the opposite bank. Three batteries were placed so as completely to sweep the road, their fires at the same time crossing each other. Through such a pass, defended by six thousand veteran soldiers, must Taylor's little army of less than two thousand men pass. In this respect, the battle-field of the 9th presented a marked contrast to that of Palo Alto, where, as we have seen, each army was drawn up in open space, and thus every opportunity afforded for manœuvering. We will find a consequent difference in the mode of conducting the attack—the engagement of Palo Alto being almost entirely of artillery; that of Resaca de la Palma, depended on other and more decisive weapons.

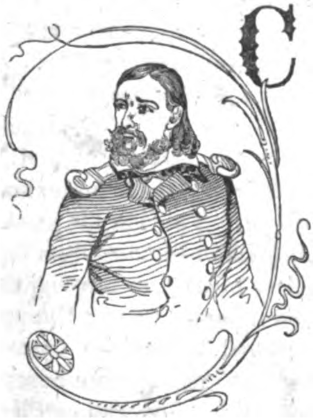
McCALL'S message reached the general at about three in the afternoon. He detached the 8th regiment with Duncan's battery, and Colonel Child's artillery brigade, to protect the wagon train, which was ordered to be immediately parked. Ridgely's battery, with three regiments of artillery, were pushed forward against the enemy's infantry; and at four o'clock Captains McCall and Smith were ordered to bring on the action.

Captain Ridgely moved carefully along the road, until within sight of the enemy. Being then met with a heavy discharge from one of their batteries, he rushed forward at full speed, until within a convenient distance, when the heavy roll of his artillery answering that of the enemy, announced the battle begun. He was seconded by the 5th infantry, and part of the 4th, and soon long streams of shot were flying between the armies, amid reports that shook the lonely ravine for miles around, and echoed back to the shores of the Rio Grande. A few minutes after, Captain McCall engaged the Mexican right wing. Soon the action became general. Through the smoke of battle, companies might be seen gliding like phantoms from one position to another, discharging rapid volleys of shot, or meeting the charges of cavalry. The artillery cut and mowed its way through entire regiments; and so terribly did Ridgely's batteries operate upon the lancers, that for awhile they were obliged to retire beyond its reach. So rapid were the discharges of the Mexican artillery that no interval could be distinguished between them; and but that they aimed too high, the American batteries would have been completely swept.

The 3d and 4th regiments were obliged to form in the ravine, in full view of the Mexicans, and exposed to their concentrated fires. Duncan's battery was on the edge, but in a position from whence he could not fire without injury to the two regiments. Still the action raged with a fierceness never before known in Mexican warfare. The best soldiers of the republic, most of whom had grown gray in her numerous wars, and who had formerly carried every field on which they fought, were now contending for mastery in a position chosen by themselves. But at length superior discipline prevailed. Gradually, inch by inch, they were driven with the bayonet through the chaparral, and forced to take refuge in a more distant position

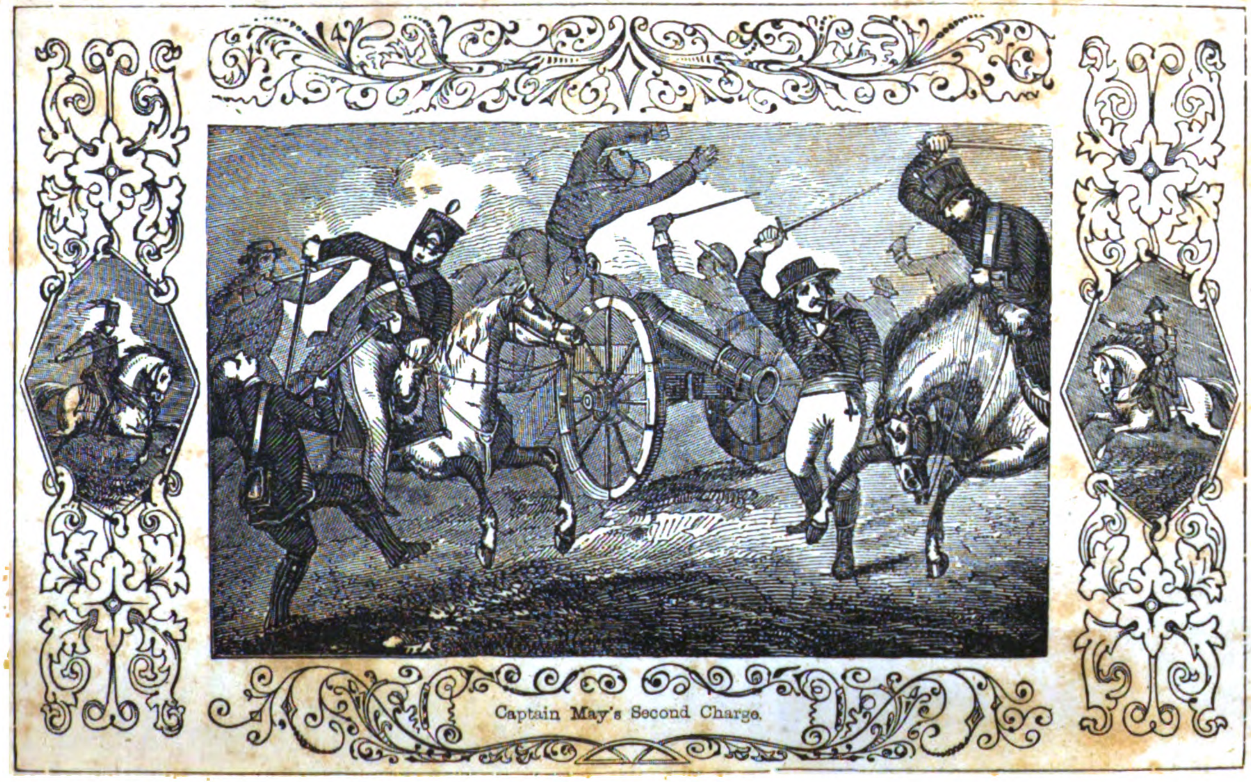
Yet the strife did not cease. Still the ravine batteries poured into the heart of the American infantry, storms of iron hail, that mowed down scores, while on the very verge of victory. Here the veterans of Tampico had taken their stand, and though the guns were surrounded by the dead and dying, maintained their position with an obstinacy worthy of victory.

As the fate of battle hung upon these guns, General Taylor sent for Captain May to report himself for duty. On his appearing, the general ordered him to charge the enemy's batteries. May, turning to his men, ordered them to follow, and then the whole command swept down the road towards the ravine. On arriving at Ridgely's position, they paused until that officer drew the enemy's fire; and then the artillery, being cleared from the road, the intrepid dragoons, with their leader ahead, dashed forward into the ravine. Then, without pause, they swept on towards the batteries.

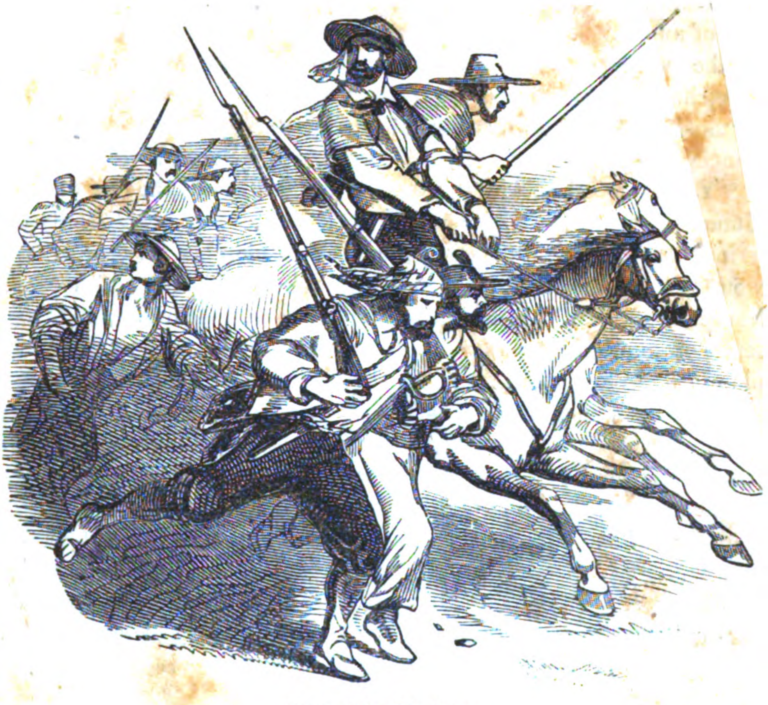


CAPTAIN MAY, when nearly touching the muzzles of the cannon, turned to encourage his men, but at that moment a blast from the batteries cut down seven men and eighteen horses, several of the former being whirled into the very midst of the Mexicans. But undismayed by this sickening sight, the remainder sprang over the guns, charged through the cannoneers, and reforming, returned with resistless force. The Mexicans were scattered, but in a few minutes they had again rallied, and with fixed bayonets returned to the shock. Throwing themselves furiously between their guns, they wielded their swords and bayonets hand to hand with the cavalry. One by one they sunk beneath the superior weapons; yet even when their regiment was crushed and broken, a Mexican endeavoured to sustain its honour by wrapping its flag about him in order to bear it away. He was ridden down by the dragoons, and himself and flag captured—the latter being subsequently sent to Congress Hall, at Washington. General La Vega was among the prisoners. He was struck at by May in the first charge, but parrying the blow, he called his troops around him, and was on the point of discharging a cannon, when the captain galloped back and ordered him to surrender. On ascertaining May's rank, he delivered his sword, and was afterwards conducted to General Taylor.

Although May had silenced the guns, he found it impossible for



Captain May's Second Charge.



Rout of the Mexicans.

cannon, swelling louder, and fiercer, and nearer, seemed to be ill results of a triumph. As anxiety deepened into racking intensity, the bombardment of the American fort ceased; cheering was suppressed, and pale, terror-stricken faces, gazed silently towards the east. In a little while their routed army came dashing through the thicket, treading each other down, as they hurried on to gain the river bank. Terror and eager haste were depicted in the countenances of the fugitives, as they poured onward to the shore. All distinction of rank was lost in the common sense of extreme danger. The terrible Americans of the north were in the rear, the city of refuge in front. Then Matamoras rang with a cry, such as she had never heard before—one of misery and despair. Only one little flatboat lay near the shore; but into this crowds of the soldiers hurried, pushing each other off, or falling headlong from the banks to a watery grave. "Mules, loaded with wounded and dying, were plunged in, and numbers were precipitated from the shore. It was an awful scene. Horse trampled over horse, crushing their riders to the earth, and trailing their bridles and furniture along the ground. The river foaming with life, while plunge after plunge announced the sad of numbers more. The shouts of officers, curses of soldiery, yells he wounded, and shrieks of the drowning, were appalling. etched beings grasped the flatboat in agony, only to be murdered those upon it; and scores of mules, and hundreds of soldiers, nched in each other's embrace, sunk to a watery grave.

"Yet, dreadful as was this scene, it was but the shadow of what Iatamoras witnessed during the night. Mules were continually entering the city, laden with wounded, whose piercing shrieks, as their wounds bled afresh at each step, rose above the din and hurry of trampling armies. All discipline and order was at an end, and thousands of infuriated soldiers poured along the streets for rapine and plunder. Women fled to the ball rooms, where preparations for victory had been made, and tore the wreaths and ornaments from the walls. Scarcely had they done so when scores of lawless rancheros burst upon them in the hurry of uncontrollable passion. Crime and debauchery revelled that night in the halls of Matamoras.

"Most of the inhabitants expected an assault by General Taylor, and therefore seized a few of their most valuable effects, and fled into the country. But the evil spirit was there also, and the unfortunate exiles were robbed and murdered in the plains, or passes of the mountains. Matamoras suffered more that day from her own citizens, than from the sword of the enemy."*

"The strength of our marching force on this day," says General Taylor, "was one hundred and seventy-three officers, and two thousand and forty-nine men—aggregate, two thousand two hundred and twenty-two. The actual number engaged with the enemy did not exceed one thousand and seven hundred. Our loss was three officers killed and twelve wounded, thirty-six men killed and seventy-one wounded. * * * * I have no accurate data from which to estimate the enemy's force on this day. He is known to have been reinforced after the action of the 8th, both by cavalry and infantry, and no doubt to an extent at least equal to his loss on that day. It is probable that six thousand men were opposed to us, and in a position chosen by themselves, and strongly defended with artillery. The enemy's loss was very great. Nearly two hundred of his dead were buried by us on the day succeeding the battle. His loss in killed, wounded, and missing in the two affairs of the 8th and 9th, is, I think, moderately estimated at one thousand men."

"Our victory has been decisive. A small force has overcome immense odds of the best troops that Mexico can furnish; veteran regiments, perfectly equipped and appointed. Eight pieces of a several colours and standards, a great number of prisoners, in fourteen officers, and a large amount of baggage and public pr have fallen into our hands."

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* Rough and Ready Annual.

Some incidents of these two memorable days are worthy of The admirable conduct of Lieutenant Blake, in reconnoitering enemy's position, has been noticed. This brave officer was not mitted to share the dangers and triumph of Resaca de la Palma. the morning of the 9th, after Captain McCall had been sent to rec noiter, he rode back with General Taylor to the train. Being exce- ively fatigued with the labours of the previous day, he alighted from his horse, and, after uttering an expression of gratification at the prospect of repose, he threw his belt and pistols upon the ground. Through some accident, one of the latter exploded, throwing its contents upward through his body. The wound was mortal. He expired in a few hours, regretting that he had not fallen at Palo Alto.

THE capture of General La Vega was a source of much gratification to the American army. After delivering his sword, he was conducted, by May's orders, to Colonel Twiggs. That officer delivered him to Colonel Childs, who, in conducting him through his command, ordered the soldiers to present arms, which they did in the utmost silence. The general, surprised at the salute, slowly and courteously raised his hat, and the troops shouldered their arms. Colonel Childs then committed his prisoner to the charge of Captain Magruder, who conducted him to General Taylor. The American commander shook him warmly by the hand, and is said to have addressed him as follows: "General, I do assure you I deeply regret that this misfortune has fallen upon you. I regret it sincerely, and I take great pleasure in returning you the sword which you have this day worn with so much gallantry." After receiving the sword, La Vega made a suitable reply in Spanish, and was then taken charge of by Colonel Twiggs, as his guest.

A description of the battle-ground has already been given. The following account of its appearance after the action, slightly altered from the narrative of an eye witness, who shared the action, may prove interesting. "Our troops were resting on the battle-ground. Alas, what a sad picture presented itself. Around were lying heaps of dead, dying, and disabled men. The sigh, the groan, the shriek of agony he air, whilst the eye could scarcely rest upon a spot where ere not dead bodies, mutilated limbs, and groups of men d into one undistinguished mass.

esaca de la Palma is covered with the graves of our fallen rymen, who fell, many of them, fighting hand to hand with the y. Their antagonists are buried around them by hundreds. I shown one grave, near the spot where the brave Cochrane is rred, in which eight Mexicans are said to have been placed; and re are many more, each containing a score or two of the slaughed foe. The grave of poor Inge was pointed out to me. It is near where one of the enemy's batteries was posted. It was with feelings of deep sadness that I recalled to mind the many virtues of this gallant and noble-minded officer. He had left a young wife in Baltimore, and had arrived at Point Isabel with a body of recruits just in time to march with General Taylor. He had distinguished himself in both battles by his heroic daring, and fell[*] at the moment when that brilliant victory, to which he contributed so largely, was about to declare itself in favour of our arms. Mexican caps, and remnants of their clothing are scattered here and there, and the whole field is dotted with marks of the enemy's camp fires. It is a wild looking place, and so advantageous was the position of the enemy, that it will ever remain a wonder to me that our little army was not cut to pieces by their greatly superior force. Over a great portion of the ground on which our army prepared to attack them, the thickets are so dense that a dog would find it difficult to penetrate them. The men actually pushed each other through these thickets, and became divided into small squads of from three to six."

THE American army bivouacked on the field; while for the first time since the morning of the 3d, the garrison under Captain Hawkins slept in conscious security. The valour of these troops, isolated as they were from all immediate succour, and on watch night and day, is equally praiseworthy with that of those who fought with Arista in the open field. The enemy had fired at them about two thousand seven hundred shells and shot; but strange to say, only one officer and a sergeant were killed, and thirteen others wounded. The difficulties of their situation were increased by the presence of all the camp women who had been left there by General Taylor. In honour of the lamented commander, the fort was denominated Fort Brown.

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[*] In May's charge on the Mexican battery.

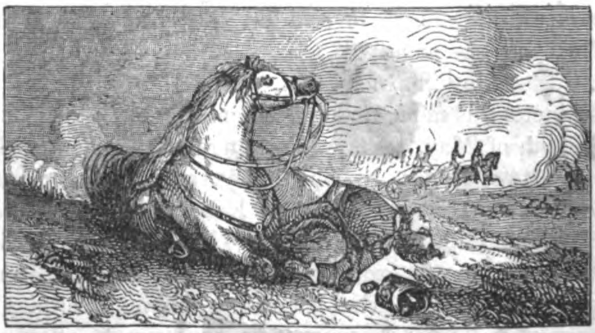
The army were congratulated for their success in the fo terms—[order No. 59, May 11, 1846]:

"The commanding general congratulates the army under hi mand upon the signal success which has crowned its recent c tions against the enemy. The coolness and readiness of the t during the action of the 8th, and the brilliant impetuosity with w the enemy's position and artillery were carried on the 9th, have d played the best qualities of the American soldier. To every office and soldier of his command, the general publicly returns his thanks for the noble manner in which they have sustained the honour of the service, and of the country.

"While the main body of the army has been thus actively employed, the garrison left opposite Matamoras has rendered no less distinguished service, by sustaining a severe cannonade and bombardment for many successive days.

"The army and country, while justly rejoicing in this triumph of our arms, will deplore the loss of many brave officers and men who fell gallantly in the hour of combat.

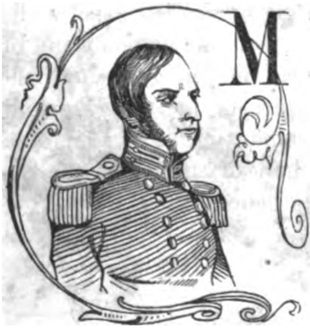
"It being necessary for the commanding general to visit Point Isabel on public business, Colonel Twiggs will assume command of the corps of the army near Matamoras, including the garrison of the field-work. He will occupy the former lines of the army, making such disposition for defence, and for the comfort of his command, as he may deem advisable. He will hold himself strictly on the defensive until the return of the commanding general."



Death of Ringgold.

CHAPTER XIII.

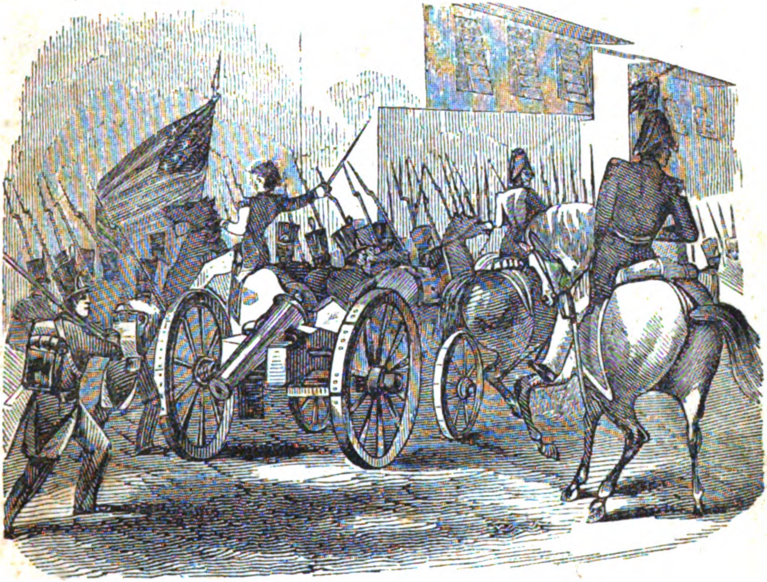
BARITA AND MATAMORAS CAPTURED.



MAJOR RINGGOLD expired on the 11th, at Point Isabel, and his funeral, with appropriate ceremonies, took place on the 12th. The major was a graduate of West Point, and esteemed one of the best artillery officers in the service. For some time he commanded a battery of light artillery, and lived to see the perfection, to which he had brought that arm of the service, exemplified on the battle-field. During the sixty hours that he survived his wound, he had but little pain, and at intervals slept. He spoke frequently of the execution done by his battery, and, notwithstanding his condition, seemed to participate in the triumph of victory as much as those around him.

On the 10th of May, 1846, an exchange of prisoners took place between the two armies, by which the Americans recovered Captains Thornton and Hardee, Lieutenant Kane, and others. The Mexican officers were liberated on parole; but this was declined by General La Vega, on the ground that he would not be permitted to remain quiet in Mexico. The Americans, having a surplus of prisoners, permitted them to rejoin their countrymen after giving a receipt of their number.

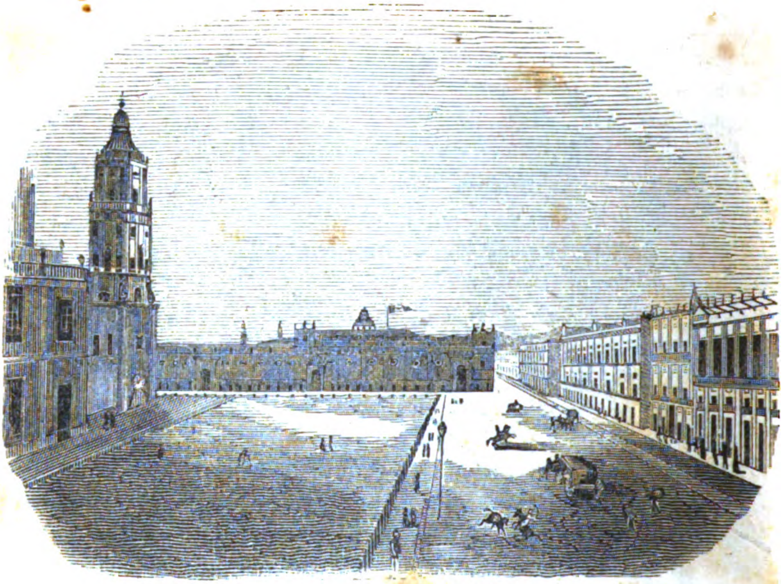
Early on the same day, General Taylor sent to Matamoras for surgeons to attend the Mexican wounded; while at the same time he



CHAPTER XXXII.

ENTRANCE INTO THE CAPITAL.

AT four o'clock, A. M. of September 13, the deputation from the Mexican Ayuntamiento, reached the head-quarters of General Scott. They reported, as before, that the army and government had left the city, and demanded in the name of the city council, terms of capitulation in favour of the church, the citizens, and municipal authorities. The general replied that he would sign no such instrument, since, virtually, the city had been in his possession for several hours. While regretting the escape of the Mexican army, he expressed his determination to levy a contribution for special purposes, and to bring his army under no terms



Grand Plaza in the City of Mexico.

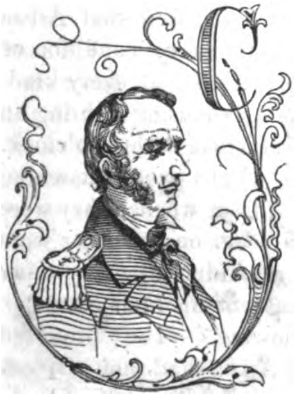
not self-imposed—"such only as its own honour, the dignity of the United States, and the spirit of the age should in my opinion imperiously demand and impose." The substance of these terms was, that the city should be laid under strict martial law; that a contribution of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars should be laid upon the capital, payable in four, weekly, instalments, and that no rent should be paid by the United States for any building occupied by troops or officers, without a special direction from general headquarters. On the other hand, no private house was to be occupied by the American troops without the free consent of the owner, or an order from General Scott, while the collection of duties at the several gates of the city was continued as before, in the hands of the Mexican authorities. A Mexican police was organized to act in concert with the Americans; and the city, with its public buildings and places of religious worship, was placed under the especial safeguard of the army. General Quitman was appointed civil and military governor, and Captain Naylor superintendent of the National Palace.

At the termination of the interview, the general-in-chief communicated orders to Generals Worth and Quitman, to advance slowly and cautiously towards the heart of the city, so as to occupy its strongest and most commanding positions. It was under obedience to these orders that Quitman, as before related, proceeded to ordered his men to collect their dead, and bury them on the same field with his own. These orders were punctually obeyed.

On the 11th, General Taylor left Fort Brown for Point Isabel, in order to hold a communication with Commodore Conner, of the gulf squadron. The commodore had but lately arrived at the point, with sufficient force to guard against the possibility of a successful attack. He now concerted with the commander, a combined movement against all the Mexican posts on the Rio Grande, designing to leave in each of them after its capture, a garrison sufficient to repel all attempts at regaining it.

On the 13th, General Taylor with his staff and a body of dragoons, set out for Fort Brown. He had proceeded but a little distance, when he was met by a courier with the information that a large Mexican force had arrived, during his absence, at Matamoras, and that the enemy were fortifying Barita, a small town on the west bank of the river, near the gulf. This news determined him to return to Point Isabel, in order to draw from thence a detachment sufficiently large to guard against all exigencies at his principal station. On reaching the point, he found that a large force, both of regulars and volunteers, had just arrived. They came from Louisiana and Alabama, being the first soldiers sent from the United States in answer to the general's demand for troops.

The general now selected about six hundred men, with two hundred and fifty wagons filled with stores, and with these, and an artillery train, he again started on the 14th for the river fort. He reached it on the same day, and immediately commenced operations for an attack upon Barita.

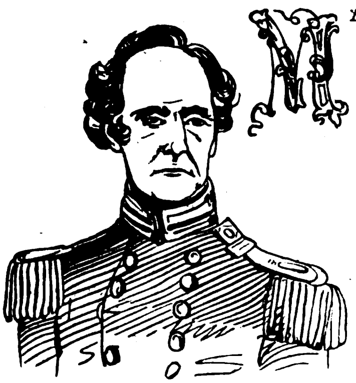


COMMODORE CONNER had arranged with the general, the plan of assault. He was to blockade the mouth of the river, and land stores, troops, and other necessaries, while Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson, with three companies of volunteers, under General Desha, and Captains F. Stockton and Tobin were to cross below Matamoras, and march down the river bank to the town. Owing to inclement weather, the commodore was not able to pass his vessels over the bar, and for this reason, could not co-operate. Wilson, however, crossed the river, and moved down upon the station. To his astonishment, he met with no enemy, and the important post of Barita was taken without the loss of a man. Some of the inhabitants, at the approach of the Americans, fled into the interior; but in a few days they returned, and business resumed its customary routine. Barita is a small village, (rancho,) about ten miles from the mouth of the river, and the same distance from Point Isabel. It is the first high land reached on ascending the river, the ground being elevated so as to command every thing around it. It forms an excellent position for a military station, communicating with the river above and below, as well as with Point Isabel, and the interior of Northern Mexico.

So embarrassing was the situation of General Taylor, through want of boats, and necessary articles for crossing the river, that he was not able to complete his preparations for this purpose until the 17th. Early on the morning of that day, while the Americans were marching to the ford, and orders had been already issued to Colonel Twiggs, the Mexicans sounded a parley, and soon after General Requena waited upon the American commander, with a communication from the city. General Arista proposed an armistice, affirming that the difficulties between the two nations would speedily be settled.

THE general replied that no armistice could be granted, at the same time reminding the Mexican officer that, a month before, he had proposed one to General Ampudia, which was declined. Circumstances had now changed. He had neither invited nor provoked hostilities, nor would he suspend them. General Requena then wished to know if the Americans intended taking Matamoras. The commander answered in the affirmative; but declared that Arista might withdraw his troops on condition of leaving the public property of every kind. The officer then left, promising to bring an answer from General Arista at three o'clock.

Meanwhile the troops were marching towards the station, from whence they were to cross. All the boats on the river were secured, and before midnight, every thing was ready for a descent on Matamoras, on the morning following. The promised answer of General Arista had not arrived. This circumstance confirmed General Taylor in his suspicions, that the armistice was a pretence for gaining time. This was made certain during the evening by the country people, who reported that the Mexican army were marching out of Matamoras with all haste.

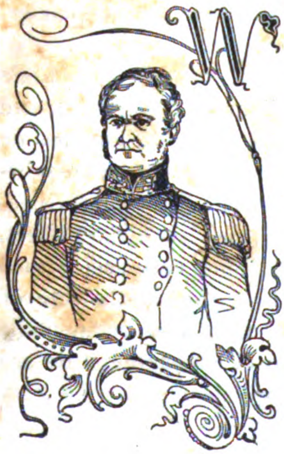


MAJOR CRAIG, Captains Bliss and Miles, and Lieutenant Britton, were deputed, on the 18th, to wait upon the authorities of Matamoras, and demand a surrender of that city. After sounding a parley, Lieutenant Britton crossed with a white flag, and was met by a committee of citizens, headed by the prefect. The latter crossed the river, and brought over the American deputation, when the whole party proceeded to the prefect's office in Matamoras. Captain Bliss then presented to the Mexican authorities a demand for the immediate surrender of the city and its public stores, providing, at the same time, for the security of all private property, and for the undisturbed possession by the inhabitants of all civil and religious rights. A definite answer being required, the prefect said that General Taylor could march his troops into the city at any hour that might suit his convenience. The deputation returned, and reported to their general.

Meanwhile the American batteries and eighteen-pounders had been placed in such a position along the shore, as to defend the crossing in case of attack. Ten men, under Lieutenant Hays and Captain Walker, were then sent over to ascertain the force and position of the enemy. They were followed by the light battalion companies, and the infantry of the 3d, 4th, and 5th companies. Two companies of the artillery battalion, under Captain Smith, together with Ker's squadron of dragoons, came next. Ridgely's artillery followed, and about the same time Captain Ker took possession of Fort Paredes, on the Mexican side, and erected the national flag upon the acknowledged soil of Mexico. At this juncture Captain Bliss joined General Taylor, and reported the result of his interview with the prefect. The satisfaction of the Americans at thus gaining easy access to a large and commodious city, was alloyed by sorrow at the fate of Lieutenant Stephens, of the 2d dragoons, who was accidentally drowned. He had accompanied Captain May in his charge at Resaca de la Palma, and, although young, was highly esteemed by the army for his skill and bravery.

During the night of the 18th a small guard was placed in the city to maintain order—the main body of the American army bivouacking along the shores of the river. Colonel Twiggs lay above the city, General Worth below, and the remainder of the army at intermediate stations.

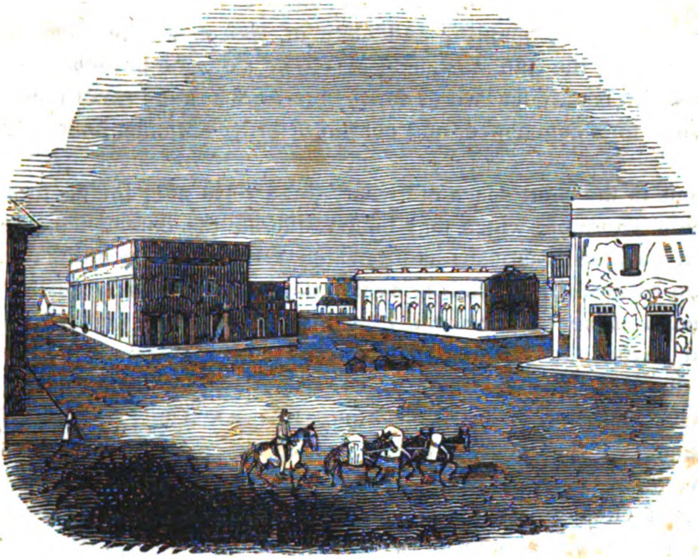
General Worth had but lately reappeared at the theatre of war; and the cause of his temporary absence has now to be explained. His last important act, previous to his leaving the army, was the interview with the Mexican authorities, immediately after planting the American flag on the river bank. Previous to this a dispute had arisen between him and Colonel Twiggs, as to precedence of rank. Twiggs's appointment [colonel 2d dragoons] was dated June 8, 1833; Worth's [colonel 8th infantry] July 7, 1838; but, in addition to this, Worth had been twice brevetted as brigadier-general, and it was on virtue of this that he now based his claim for a rank next to General Taylor. Twiggs refused to yield, affirming that a brevet was no commission, and consequently conferred no rank. The matter was referred to General Taylor, who decided in favour of Twiggs. Considering the decision unjust, Worth threw up his commission, and sailed for the United States. Previous to departing, he addressed a letter to General Taylor, in which, while regretting the necessity of the step, he expressed his belief that open hostilities would not occur, but, should that be the case, he would gladly withdraw his resignation. "If," he concludes, "there is any form or manner in which, out of authority, I can serve you, it is hardly necessary to say with what alacrity I shall be always at your command. At the earliest moment when you feel assured that no conflict is at hand, or in prospective, I shall be much gratified by being allowed to retire, and not before."



WORTH had scarcely reached Washington, and tendered his resignation, when news of Taylor's difficulties reached that city, followed in a few days by accounts of the battles on the Rio Grande. Previous to receiving the latter, Worth wrote as follows to the adjutant-general:

"Reliable information, which I have this moment received from the head-quarters of the army, in front of Matamoras, makes it not only my duty, but accords with my inclination, to request permission to withdraw my resignation, and that I be ordered or permitted forthwith to return to, and take command of, the troops from which I was separated on the 7th of April, by order No. 43, army of occupation."

This request being complied with, the general left Washington on the 11th of May, and reached the Rio Grande in time to participate



Public Square, Matamoras.

in the taking of Matamoras. After the occupation of the city by the American troops, Colonel Twiggs was appointed military governor. So precipitate had been the retreat of the enemy, that large quantities of military stores were strewed along their track, boxes and storehouses were broken open, and quantities of arms and ammunition thrown into wells and among thickets.

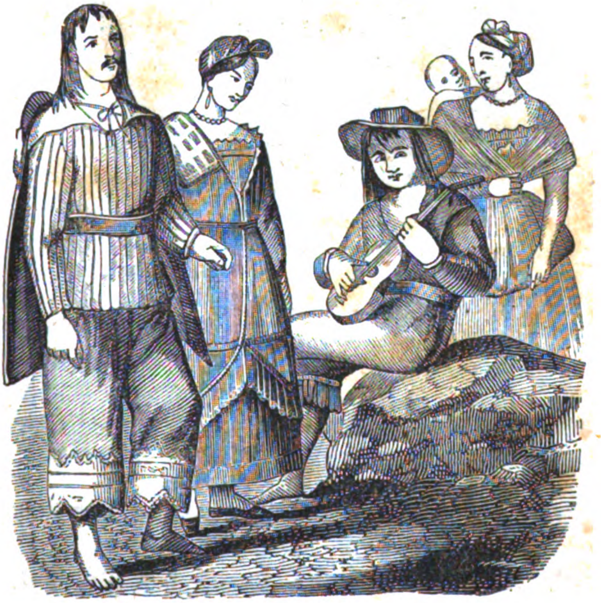
An officer of the American army thus describes the city:—"Matamoras is a much handsomer place than I expected to find it. It covers two miles square, though by no means as compact as an American city. Every house, except those around the public square, has a large garden attached. The houses in the business part of the town are built after the American fashion, though seldom exceeding two stories in height. All the windows to these buildings are grated from top to bottom with iron bars, and half of the door only opens for admittance, which gives them the appearance of prisons, more than business houses. The public square is in the centre of the town, and must have been laid out by an American or European, for the Mexicans never could have laid it out with such beauty and precision. On the four sides of the square the houses are built close together, as in a block, and are all of the same size and height, with the exception of the cathedral, which, though unfinished, still towers above the others. In these houses are sold dry goods, groceries, and every kind of wares, with now and then an exchange or coffee-house.

They are principally occupied by Europeans, and one can hear French, English, Spanish, and German, spoken at the same time. After leaving the public square, on either side, the houses decrease in size and beauty for two or three squares, when the small reed and thatched huts commence, and continue to the extreme limits of the place."

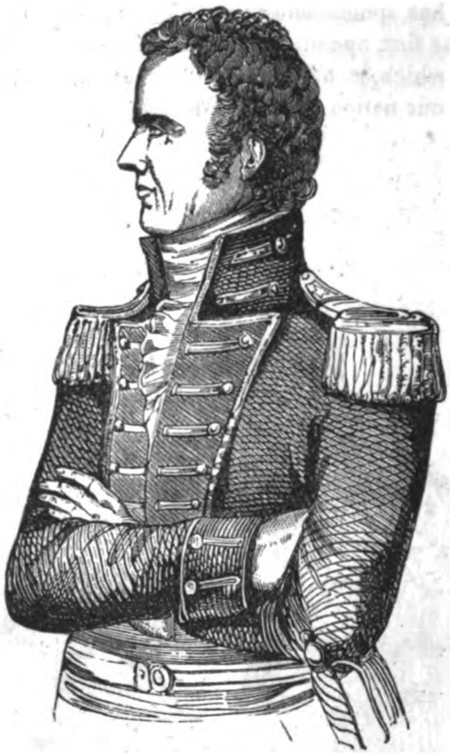
Thus in the short space of twenty-three days after the capture of Captain Thornton, which may be considered the commencement of actual war, the Americans had defeated a superior force of the enemy in two battles, driven their army into the interior, entirely destroying its moral efficiency, successfully defended two isolated positions, captured Barita and Matamoras, and destroyed for ever the Mexican jurisdiction in Texas. Such results had displayed to the world the military character of our officers and troops. The long peace had not impaired the national energy, nor rendered less formidable that army, which in the nation's infancy had twice braved the utmost efforts of Great Britain; and foreign powers, who had scoffed at the unavoidable prolongation of the Seminole difficulties in Florida, were taught other dispositions, when a fair opportunity was offered for the display of our energies.

But this campaign did more. It taught our own soldiers their efficiency. Since that time, no American force has ever thought of being defeated by any amount of Mexican troops. Whenever and however the two nations have met in the field, the Americans were sure of victory before the battle commenced. This very confidence has no doubt often been one main cause of triumph. Had the battle of Buena Vista been the first one of the war, there is every reason to believe that Santa Anna would have triumphed; for often, during the exigencies of that terrible action, when victory hung in long uncertainty upon the conduct of single parties, the remembrance of former triumphs was the mainspring of American effort. Such was the case, too, in the battles before Mexico; and frequently even the Mexicans seem to have contended less for victory, than for the support of the national honour, by a vigorous though unsuccessful resistance.

Another result of our operations on the Rio Grande, was to bring prominently before the nation the merit of our officers. It might seem inexplicable to the commanders of Europe, that the general who now ranks among the first of our military men, was, prior to these operations, unknown even by name to the bulk of his countrymen. The same may be said of Generals Twiggs, Worth, Smith, and others, all of whom are now among the brightest ornaments of the service. Other generals have been appointed since that time, some of whom have displayed a valour and skill remarkable in citizen soldiery; but none have ever taken that hold upon public approbation, which a grateful nation has spontaneously extended to the heroes of the Ri Grande. These first operations of the war must be considered the foundation on which is based to a great extent all the glory which has accrued to our nation from the Mexican war.



Mexicans in their holiday attire.



General Gaines.

CHAPTER XIV.

EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE CAPTURE OF MATAMORAS.

THE crossing of the Rio Grande placed the relative position of the two armies in a new aspect. Hitherto General Taylor's force had been an army of occupation, now it was to become an invading power. Future triumphs were to be not only victories but conquests; disputed boundary no longer formed an impediment to onward progress; and the city of Mexico now became the ultimate object of military operations.

On the 11th of May, 1846, President Polk, after receiving intelligence of Thornton's capture, transmitted to the American congress a message, in which he announced that war had actually commenced. After a long enumeration of the causes of this event, and of the aggressions committed by Mexico against our citizens, the president concludes in the following language: "War actually existing, and our territory having been invaded, General Taylor, pursuant to authority vested in him by my direction, has called on the governor of Texas for four regiments of state troops, two to be mounted, and two to serve on foot; and on the governor of Louisiana, for four regiments of infantry, to be sent to him as soon as practicable.

"In further vindication of our rights, and defence of our territory, I invoke the prompt action of Congress, to recognize the existence of the war, and to place at the disposition of the executive the means of prosecuting the war with vigour, and thus hastening the restoration of peace. To this end I recommend that authority should be given to call into the public service a large body of volunteers, to serve for not less than six or twelve months, unless sooner discharged.

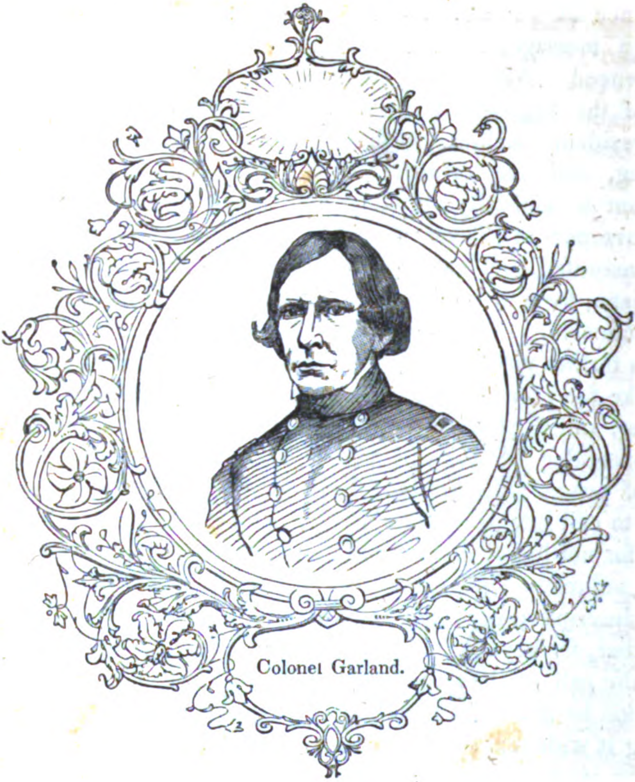
"A volunteer force is, beyond question, more efficient than any other description of citizen soldiers; and it is not to be doubted that a number, far beyond that required, would readily rush to the field upon the call of their country. I further recommend that a liberal provision be made for sustaining our entire military force, and furnishing it with supplies and munitions of war.

"The most energetic and prompt measures, and the immediate appearance in arms of a large and overpowering force, are recommended to Congress as the most certain and efficient means of bringing the existing collision with Mexico to a speedy and successful termination.

"In making these recommendations, I deem it proper to declare, that it is my anxious desire, not only to terminate hostilities speedily, but to bring all matters in dispute between this government and Mexico to an early and amicable adjustment; and in this view I shall be prepared to renew negotiations, whenever Mexico shall be ready to receive propositions, or to make propositions of her own."

Agreeably to these suggestions of the president, Congress passed an act on the 13th of May, declaring the existence of war between the two republics, empowering the president to accept the services of fifty thousand volunteers, and appropriating ten millions of dollars to defray expenses. Thus authorized, the executive issued a proclamation, invoking the nation to assist in sustaining these measures.

After the capture of Matamoras, the American general used every



Colonel Garland.

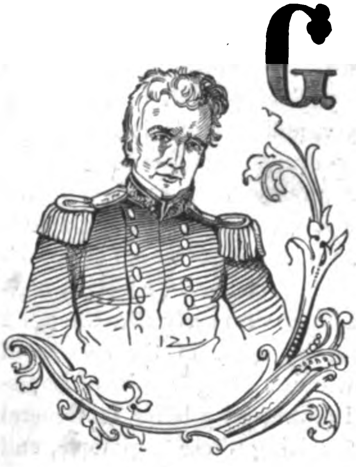
exertion to increase the impression already made upon the Mexican nation. On the day following the surrender of the city, Colonel Garland, with two companies of rangers and the dragoons, was sent into the interior to follow up and observe the course of the retreating army. The command, being quite small, was not designed for hostile operations, but merely as a corps of observation. After proceeding about twenty-seven miles, he fell in with the enemy's rear-guard, which he attacked, killing two men, wounding two, and capturing twenty, with their baggage. Two of his rangers were wounded. He advanced sixty miles, and returned to Matamoras on the 22d.

About this time large reinforcements of troops began to arrive, in answer to the requisition made by General Taylor upon the governors of the more southern states. The influx of these volunteers was so rapid, and in such large quantities, that the general soon found himself completely embarrassed. The object purposed by government he was not aware of; and, having but a limited quantity of supplies, he was soon in a situation more perplexing than that which preceded the 8th of May. From this time the general is observed under peculiar circumstances, struggling with difficulties which he had had no agency in producing, and the removal of which was entirely beyond his control. The history of this period, though chiefly diplomatic, forms an interesting chapter, and abounds in reasons for many otherwise inexplicable subsequent events. On the 20th of May, the commander wrote as follows to the adjutant-general at Washington:

"On the 26th of April, I had found it necessary to use the authority with which I was vested, and call upon the governors of Louisiana and Texas for a force each of four regiments. The eight regiments thus called for would make a force of nearly five thousand men, which I deemed sufficient to meet the wants of the service in this quarter. At the same time that I wrote to the governor of Louisiana, requesting this volunteer force, I addressed a letter to General Gaines, desiring him to assist in organizing these regiments, and having them promptly supplied. In my communication to the governor, the organization was very exactly prescribed, being that indicated from your office, on the 25th of August, 1845. I find, however, that the organization has been exceeded, and, moreover, that General Gaines has called for many more volunteers than I deemed necessary, extending the call to other states beside Louisiana.

"It will, of course, be for the government to decide whether the future operations in this quarter will require the amount of force (entirely unknown) which is coming hither. I only desire to say, that this reinforcement, beyond the eight regiments mentioned above, was never asked for by me, and that, in making the call of the 26th of April, I well knew that, if the Mexicans fought us at all, it would be before the arrival of the volunteers. It was for the purpose of clearing the river, and performing such further service as the government might direct, that I thought it proper to ask for reinforcements. It is extremely doubtful whether the foot regiments from Texas can be raised, and I shall desire the governor to suspend the call for them. * * * * I fear that the volunteers have exhausted the supply of tents deposited in New Orleans for the use of this army. We are greatly in want of them; and I must request that immediate measures be taken to send direct to Brazos Santiago, say one thousand tents, for the use of the army in the field. The tents of the 7th infantry were cut up to make sand-bags during the recent bombardment of Fort Brown."

The orders of General Gaines, to which General Taylor refers in this letter, together with their consequences to that officer, form a most interesting episode of the war, should be noticed in this connection.

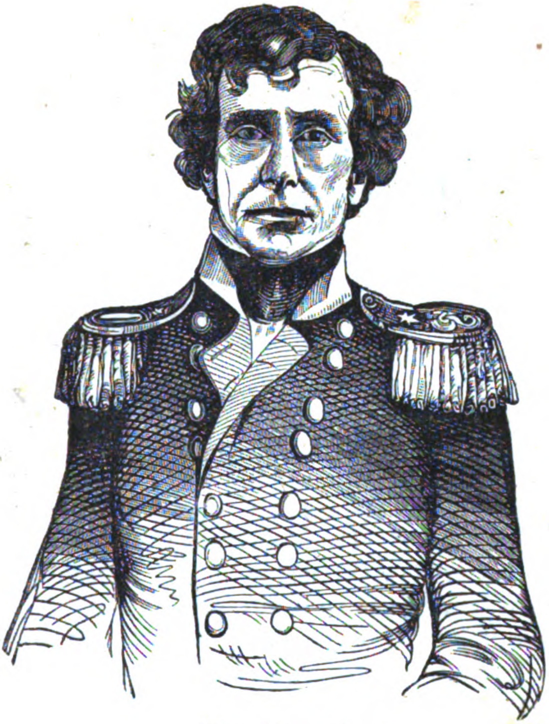


GENERAL GAINES, at the opening of the Mexican war, held command of the south-western department of the army, his head-quarters being at New Orleans. He watched the fortunes of the little army of occupation with deep anxiety; and when news arrived of its being divided into two portions, each of which was surrounded by a vastly superior force, a soldier's sympathy impelled him to attempt its rescue. Soon after, General Taylor informed him officially of his situation, and that a volunteer force, consisting of four regiments from Louisiana, and four from Texas had been ordered as reinforcements. At the same time he was requested to aid the governor of Louisiana in equipping and forwarding the troops of that state.

On receiving this information, General Gaines wrote to the governors of Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri, advising them to anticipate a call from the president for volunteers, and to make preparations to raise the troops. It was in compliance with this call that the large number of volunteers of which General Taylor complains, were mustered and sent to the Rio Grande. He also appointed several officers of the staff. This course met the decided disapprobation of President Polk; and General Gaines was immediately ordered to Washington to answer for his conduct before a court-martial, of which General Brady was chairman. After a searching and impartial trial, the court reported that General Gaines had exceeded and disobeyed his orders; but that it had been from an honest conviction of duty, and a belief that his measures would meet the full approbation of the executive. The report concludes with the following complimentary language:

"Having now reported their finding and opinion, the court recommend to the favourable consideration of the president, the good and patriotic motives and the public zeal by which, as the court believe, General Gaines was actuated in all these transactions, and therefore they recommend that no further proceedings be had in this case."

This report was approved, and the case dismissed. General Gaines was subsequently appointed to the command of the northern department, with his head-quarters at New York.



General Roger Jones.

We resume the account of the correspondence between Genera. Taylor and the war department. The letter last quoted was followed by other letters of similar import, from one of which, dated June 3d, we give an extract: "I am necessarily detained at this point, for want of suitable transportation to carry on offensive operations. There is not a steamboat at my command proper for the navigation of the Rio Grande; and without water transportation I consider it useless to attempt any extensive movement. Measures have been taken to procure boats of suitable draught and description, and one or two may be now expected. * * * * I trust the department will see that I could not possibly have anticipated the arrival of such heavy reinforcements from Louisiana as are now here, and on their way hither. Without large means of transportation, this force will embarrass, rather than facilitate our operations. I cannot doubt that the department has already given instructions based upon the change in our position since my first call for volunteers."

On the 10th of the same month, he wrote to the adjutant-general, Roger Jones, as follows:

"I beg leave earnestly to invite the attention of the department to the following points:

"First: The great influx of volunteers at Point Isabel; Five regiments certainly from Louisiana, numbering, say three thousand six hundred men; two regiments or battalions from Louisville and St. Louis, numbering, say twelve hundred men more; several companies from Alabama, and I know not how many from Texas—the latter now beginning to arrive. The volunteer troops, now under my orders, amount to nearly six thousand men. How far they may be increased without previous notification to me, it is impossible to tell.

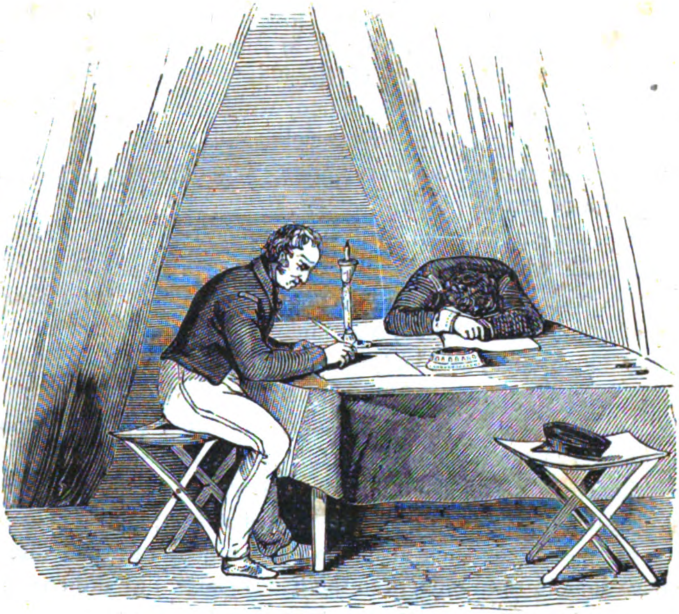
"Secondly: The entire want of the proper kind of transportation to push my operations up the river. The boats on which I depended for this service were found to be nearly destroyed by worms, and entirely unfit for the navigation of the river. At my instance, Major Thomas, on the 18th of May, required from Lieutenant-Colonel Hunt, a boat of the proper description, and followed it up in a few days by a requisition for another. At the last dates from New Orleans, no boats had been procured. Captain Sanders, of the engineers, was despatched by me to New Orleans, to assist in procuring suitable boats but I have yet received no report from him.

"As I have previously reported, my operations are completely paralyzed, by the want of suitable steamboats to navigate the Rio Grande. Since the 18th of May, the army has lain in camp near this place, continually receiving heavy reinforcements of men, but no facility for water transport, without which, additional numbers are but an embarrassment.

"I desire to place myself right in this matter, and to let the department see that the inactivity of the army results from no neglect of mine. I must express my astonishment that such large reinforcements have been sent forward to join the army without being accompanied by the means of transportation, both by land and water, to render them efficient. As matters now stand, whatever may be the expectations of the department, I cannot move from this place; and unless Captain Sanders shall succeed in procuring boats, I can give no assurance in regard to future operations."

Notwithstanding the unmistakable language of this extract, we find the general compelled to write as follows, on the 17th of June.

"No steamboats have been sent out from New Orleans for the navigation of the Rio Grande, and in the absence of all information on that point, or respecting the views of the government, I am altogether in the dark as to our future operations. I must think that orders have been given, by superior authority, to suspend the forwarding of means of transportation from New Orleans. I cannot



General Taylor writing to the War Department.

otherwise account for the extraordinary delay shown by the quartermaster's department in that city. Even the mails, containing, probably, important despatches from the government, are not expedited.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson has occupied Reynosa without opposition. What remains of the Mexican army, is understood to be still at Linares, and has suffered from disease. . . . . Volunteer regiments have arrived from Louisville and St. Louis, making with those from Louisiana, eight strong and organized battalions, mustering over five thousand men.

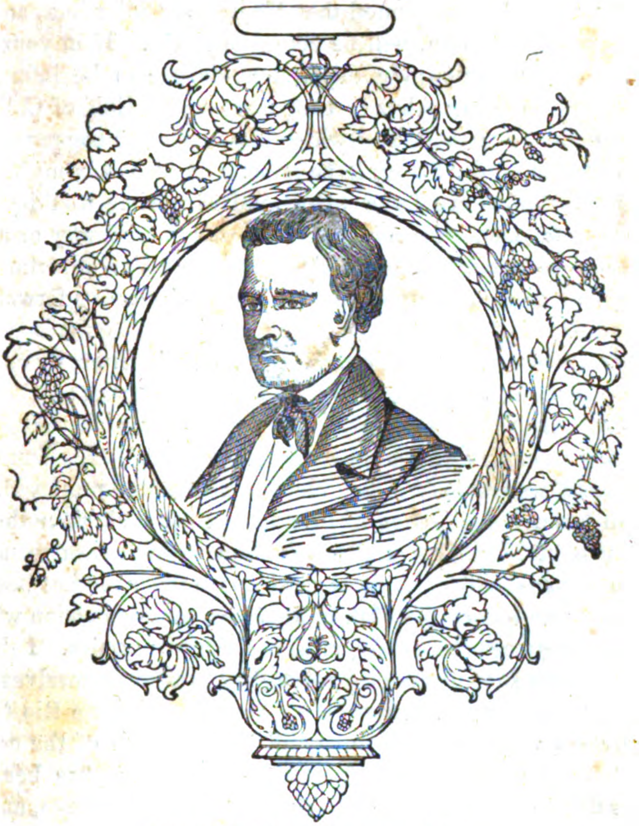
"In addition, we have seven companies of Alabama volunteers, and twelve or fifteen companies from Texas. Others from Texas are continually arriving. A portion of these volunteers have been lying in camp at this place for nearly a month, completely paralyzed by the want of transportation. Exposed as they are, in this climate, to diseases of the camp, and without any prospect, so far as I can see, of being usefully employed, I must recommend that they be allowed to return to their homes."

On the 9th of July, 1846, Secretary Marcy addressed a confidential letter to the general, from which we give the following extracts:

"The war is only carried on to obtain justice; and the sooner that can be obtained, and with the least expenditure of blood and money, the better. One of the evils of war is the interruption of diplomatic communications between the respective authorities, and the consequent ignorance under which each may lie in relation to the views of the other. The natural substitute of these interrupted diplomatic communications is the military intercourse, which the usages of war allow between contending armies in the field, and in which commanding generals can do much towards reopening negotiations, and smoothing the way to a return of peace.

"The president has seen with much approbation the civility and kindness with which you have treated your prisoners, and all the inhabitants with whom you have come in contact. He wishes that course of conduct continued, and all opportunities taken to conciliate the inhabitants, and let them see that peace was within their reach the moment their rulers will consent to do us justice. The inhabitants should be encouraged to remain in their towns and villages, and these sentiments be carefully made known to them. The same things may be said to officers made prisoners, or who may visit your head-quarters according to the usages of war; and it is the wish of the president that such visits be encouraged, and also that you take occasions to send officers to the head-quarters of the enemy, for military purposes, real or ostensible, which are of ordinary occurrence between armies, and in which opportunity may be taken to speak of the war itself as only carried on to obtain justice, and that we had much rather procure that by negotiation than by fighting. Of course authority to speak for your government will be disavowed, but a knowledge of its wishes will be averred, and a readiness will be expressed to communicate to your government the wishes of the Mexican government to negotiate for honourable peace whenever such shall be their wish, and with the assurance that such overtures will be met in a corresponding spirit by your government. A discreet officer, who understands Spanish, and who can be employed, in the intercourse so usual between armies, can be your confidential agent on such occasions, and can mask his real under his ostensible object of a military interview.

"You will also readily comprehend that, in a country so divided into races, classes, and parties as Mexico is, and with so many local divisions among departments, and personal divisions among individuals, there must be great room for operating on the minds and feelings of large portions of the inhabitants, and inducing them to wish success to an invasion which has no desire to injure their country, and which in overthrowing their oppressors, may benefit themselves. Between the Spaniards, who monopolize the wealth and power of the country, and the mixed Indian race, who bear its burdens, there must be jealousy and animosity. The same



Hon. W. L. Marcy, Secretary of War.

feelings must exist between the lower and the higher orders of the clergy, the latter of whom have the dignities and the revenues, while the former have poverty and labour. In fact, the curates were the chief authors of the revolution which separated Mexico from Spain, and their relative condition to their superiors is not much benefited by it."

In this letter, the secretary hinted at other operations than those in which Taylor was then engaged, and suggested Tampico or Vera Cruz as their base; the letter concludes as follows:

"Upon these important points, in addition to those mentioned in my letter of the 8th of June, your opinions and views are desired at the earliest period your duties will permit you to give them. In the mean time, the department confidently relies on you to press forward your operations vigorously to the extent of your means, so as to occupy the important points within your reach on the Rio Grande and in the interior. It is presumed that Monterey, Chihuahua, and other places in your direction, will be taken and held. If in your power to give the information, the department desires to be informed of the distance from Chihuahua to Guaymas, on the Gulf of California; whether there be a road over which ordnance and baggage-wagons could be taken, and whether it be practicable for an army to march from the former to the latter place, and what time would probably be required for mounted men, and what time for infantry or artillery to do so. This information is desired, before the department can be prepared to decide upon the propriety of sending forward such an expedition."

On the 1st of August, the general answered this letter, by one (from Matamoras) from which we give the following extracts:

"First. As to the intercourse with the enemy, and means of obtaining information with regard to his movements, &c., I fear that no very satisfactory results will be obtained in the way proposed. The Mexican generals and other officers have exhibited, since the commencement of hostilities, a determination to hold with us as little intercourse as possible. A most rigid non-intercourse has been held throughout; and since the 17th of June, no communication whatever has passed between the head-quarters of the two armies. I shall not fail to improve such occasions, when they present themselves in the manner pointed out by the secretary. Since crossing the Rio Grande, it has been my constant aim to conciliate the people of the country; and I have the satisfaction of believing that much has been done towards that object, not only here, but at Reynosa, Camargo, and other towns higher up the river. The only obstacle I encounter, in carrying out this desirable policy, arises from the employment of volunteer troops. Some excesses have been committed by them upon the people and their property, and more, I fear, are to be apprehended. With every exertion, it is impossible effectually to control these troops, unaccustomed as they are to the discipline of camps, and losing, in bodies, the restraining sense of individual responsibility. With increased length of service, these evils, it is hoped, will be diminished.

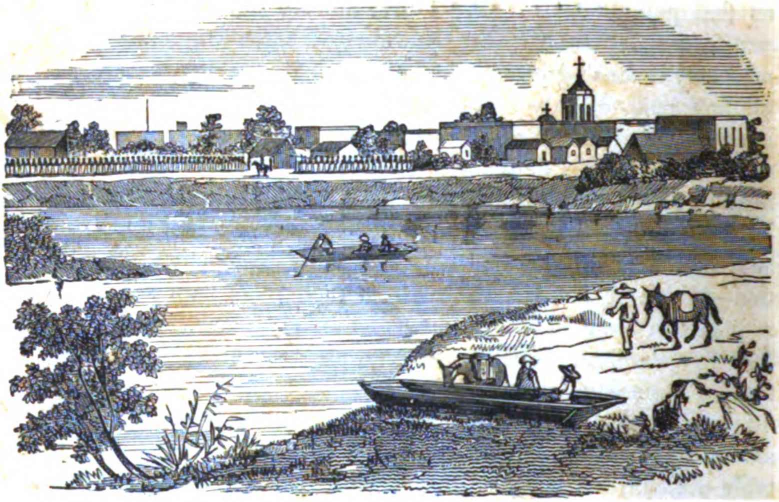
"Second. In regard to availing ourselves of internal divisions and discord among the Mexicans, it is hardly time yet to say how far this may be relied upon as an element of success. I have good reason to believe that the country lying between the Rio Grande and the Sierra Madre, is disposed to throw off the yoke of the central government, and will perhaps do so, as soon as it finds a strong American force between it and the capital. I shall do all in my power to encourage this movement, of which I received indications from many quarters, and shall comply fully with the instructions of the secretary on that point. * * * * * * * * I have already had occasion to represent to the department, that the volunteer force ordered to report to me here, is much greater than I can possibly employ, at any rate, in the first instance; the influx of twelve month's volunteers has even impeded my forward movement, by engrossing all the resources of the quartermaster's department to land them, and transport them to healthy positions. This circumstance, in connexion with the possibility of an expedition against ——, leads me to regret that one division of the volunteers had not been encamped—say at Pass Christian—where it could have been instructed until its services were required in the field.

"These embarrassments, however, are now mostly overcome; the regular force is nearly all at Camargo; and all the arrangements are made to throw forward the volunteers to the same point. The president may be assured, that no one laments more than I do the inevitable difficulties and delays that have attended our operations here, and that no exertion of mine has been or will be wanting, to press forward the campaign with all possible vigour. But I deem it indispensable to take such amount of force, and observe such precautions as not to leave success a matter of doubt."

Such is the more important part of the interesting correspondence between General Taylor and the war department. Without it, a history of the Mexican war would be incomplete, since it gives reasons and causes for many things otherwise inexplicable. We here see the commander in a new position, surrounded with uncontrollable difficulties, but resolutely maintaining what he believes right, and unwilling to bear any blame for matters for which he is not accountable. At the same time, the views of government are unfolded, as well as the avowed purpose for which the war was carried on.

During the time covered by this correspondence, military events of some interest had been transpiring among portions of the army. Congress, on receiving news of General Taylor's victory, appointed him a major-general by brevet; and in less than a month after, [June 18th,] commissioned him full major-general. He thus became the second officer in rank of the American army.

On the 6th of June, Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson, with four companies of the first infantry, Price's company of rangers, and a section of Bragg's battery, under Lieutenant Thomas, was sent to take possession of Reynosa, which he did without meeting with any opposition. The town is situated on the Rio Grande, sixty miles above Matamoras. On the day following, Governor Henderson arrived from Texas, with a large command of volunteers. On the 14th of July, Camargo was occupied without resistance by a detachment of two

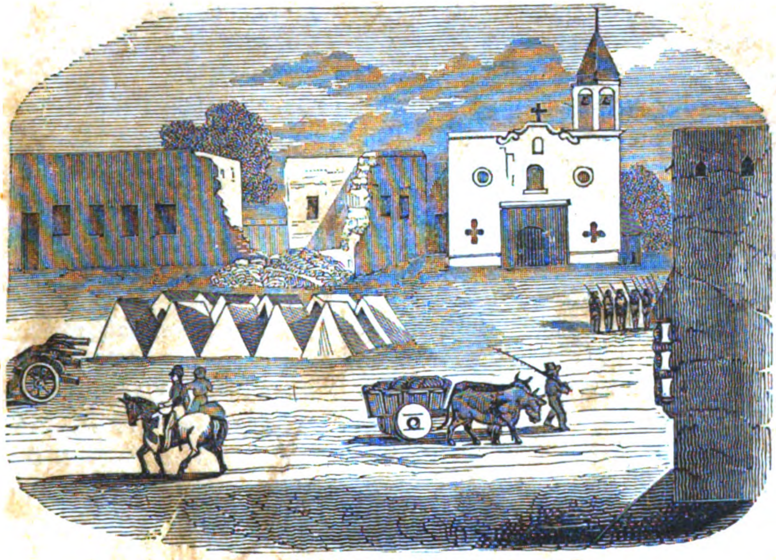


Camargo, looking North.

companies of the 7th infantry, under Captain Miles. Two weeks after, [July 31,] Captain Vinton, with a small force, occupied Mier without resistance. This was followed by the capture of China, by McCulloch's Texas rangers. On the same day, General Taylor, with the main body of the army, left Matamoras for Camargo, leaving the command of the former place with Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, who had two companies of artillery, and a regiment of Ohio volunteers under Colonel Curtis.

"Camargo," says Captain Henry, "is a dilapidated town, situated upon the river San Juan, a few miles above its junction with the Rio Grande. It boasts, like all Mexican towns, of a grand plaza and a cathedral, a few low stone buildings, of very thick walls and flat roofs, a great many miserable 'jackals,' not a few donkeys, and any number of dogs and fighting chickens. The 7th infantry, under the command of Captain Miles, was encamped in the plaza. The town was completely inundated in June last, and the population driven out. It may once have boasted of two thousand inhabitants, but there were not more than half that number at the time of the arrival of our army. The cathedral is of no particular architectural beauty; it has a cupola and two bells. Nearly every building in the place was occupied in some manner by the government."

Reid, in his "Texas Rangers," mentions the inundation of Camargo. "On ascending the bank, we were struck with the desolation and ruin which had spread itself on every side. The late flood, which had been the cause of it, came on rapidly in the night, while

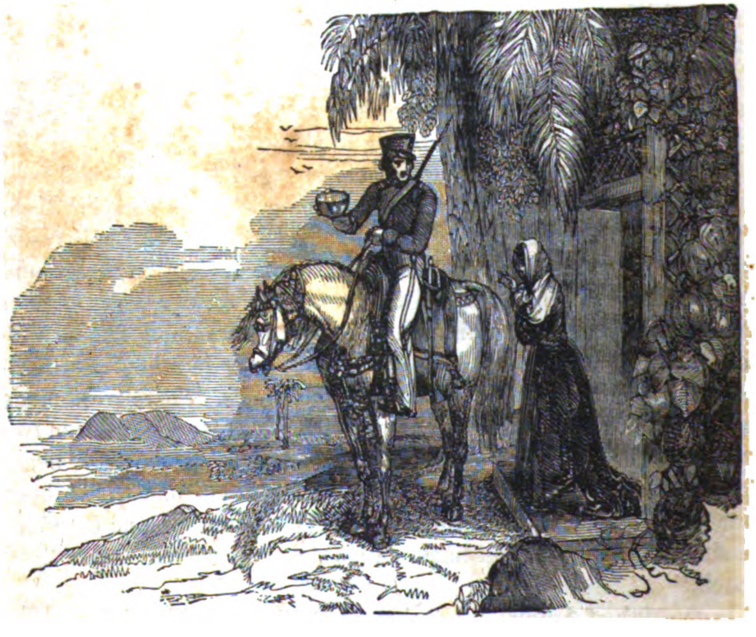


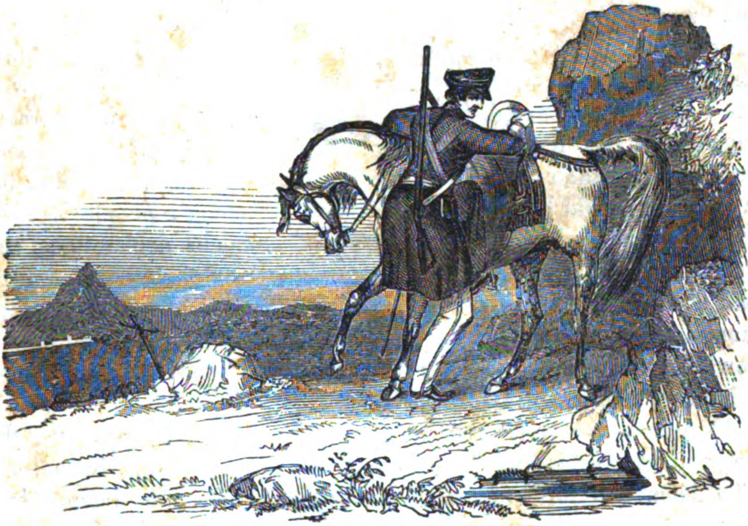
Grand Plaza, Camargo.

the inhabitants were wrapped in their peaceful slumbers; and many had not the least intimation of it until the waters had actually floated them out of their beds. From a description which we received from a Mexican who was here at the time, it must have been heart-rending in the extreme. Mothers were seen wading, waist deep, carrying their children in their arms, hurrying to places of safety, filling the air with shrieks of dismay. The men were engaged saving the children, many of whom were clinging to floating materials, and carrying them to the tops of the houses for safety, which had become the only resort among the poorer classes, who lived in huts and slept on the ground floor, while those who occupied the two-story houses were in greater peril; for the walls, becoming saturated, gave way and fell in with a crash, frequently drowning a whole family, while others were carried away by the flood, or drowned in their beds. There were many lives lost; and the destruction of property was very great, about two hundred houses having been ruined. The town was once very beautiful; and, from the ruined walls, we saw the houses must have been quite pretty. It contains three plazas, in the middle one of which are situated the finest buildings, and where still stands a neat little church."

On the 12th of August, a detachment of Captain Gillespie's rangers, another of Captain McCulloch's, with Captain James Duncan, of the 3d artillery, and Lieutenant Wood, of the engineer corps, left Camargo, crossed the San Juan, and took the road to Mier. Early on the 14th, they reached the town of Seralvo, seventy-five miles from Camargo. After placing sentinels at the avenues, the party entered the town, and advanced as far as the plaza. Captain Duncan then rode to the alcalde's house, and demanded a surrender, which was immediately made. They then advanced some distance into the country, and returned to Camargo on the 17th.

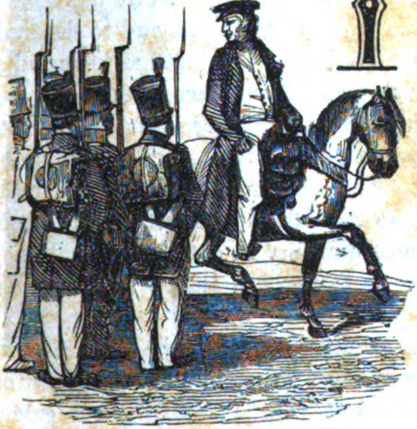
On receiving Captain Duncan's report, General Taylor ordered the 1st brigade of the 2d (Worth's) division to cross the river, [August 19,] and take up its march for the interior. On the 21st, Major-General Butler reached camp, in company with Generals Quitman and Hamer—all of the volunteers. The 2d dragoons, under General Twiggs, together with the light artillery batteries of Captains Ridgely and Taylor also arrived. The 2d brigade of Worth's division, with two companies of infantry, crossed the San Juan on the 25th, and marched for Seralvo. Other portions of the army followed shortly after, and in the early part of September, General Taylor was moving forward with all available rapidity for the city of Monterey.





CHAPTER XV.

MARCH TO MONTEREY.



THE victories of General Taylor had caused some important changes in Mexican policy. Arista was ordered to the capital under arrest, and most of the officers who had served under him were either court-martialed or removed. The popularity of Paredes daily decreased, and several parties were in open array against him. The country was in a tumult of excitement, anxious for the utter extermination of the invaders, but distracted by factions, and ignorant of the means for promoting its object. But amid this wreck of former prospects, and sickening apprehension as to the future, one man managed to maintain his popularity. This was Ampudia; and he effected his purpose by intrigue and misrepresentation. Immediately after the action of the 9th, while Matamoras yet rung with the yells of maddened disappointment, he busied himself with spreading reports that the main cause of disaster was Arista's cowardice; and that had the command of the army been intrusted to him, the Americans would have been annihilated. Among a people like the Mexicans, untried valour, garnished with pompous declarations, can generally prevail against misfortune, whether culpable or otherwise; and accordingly, the officer who had made one of the most vigorous stands ever effected by the Mexicans, was disgraced; while his cowardly and fawning accuser received all the honours of conducting a battle which he did not even share.

Monterey, the great interior city of Northern Mexico, was the point to which the American general was now directing his march. The defence of this important place was intrusted to General Ampudia. The garrison was large, and the works of sufficient strength to be considered impregnable. On the 31st of August, he issued a proclamation, forbidding any "contraband trade" with the Americans, on penalty of death. The paper opens as follows:

"Considering that the hour has arrived when energetic measures and precautionary dispositions should be taken to liberate the departments of the east from the rapacity of the Anglo-Americans, and for attending to the rights of the people and the usages of war, every person who may prove a traitor to his country, or a spy of the enemy, shall suffer death without any remission of sentence; and taking into consideration that it is my bounden duty to put an end to the evils which have been caused by the contraband trade that has been indiscriminately carried on by the usurpers of our sacred territory, and using the faculties which the laws have empowered me with, I declare as follows." Here follows a specification of crimes, and the death penalty attached to each. The proclamation had considerable effect on the Mexican traders, so that after its circulation the American army experienced the utmost difficulty in obtaining supplies.

On the same day another proclamation was issued by Ampudia, of which we give the principal part:

"The army of the United States having invaded the Mexican territory, and penetrated, with the greatest insolence, into the heart of this department, threatens to occupy its capital; and without calculating the end of his invasion, I am compelled to provide for the emergency and augment successively our defences, placing in action all the elements we can command. The importance of this place, and my responsibility are apparent. The enemy has dared to present himself at our doors, and with his advance has insulted and provoked us without motive or any reason to justify his ignoble and treacherous proceedings. I must then avoid and prevent the evil which approaches, for it is thus that honour and duty advise. Let us go to repel force with force, as the instinct of self-preservation dictates. But I ought first to adopt all the means capable of giving order to my operations; and for this object, using the ample authority which the supreme government has conceded to me, and with which in my character as general-in-chief, it has invested me for such cases, I publish the following declaration:

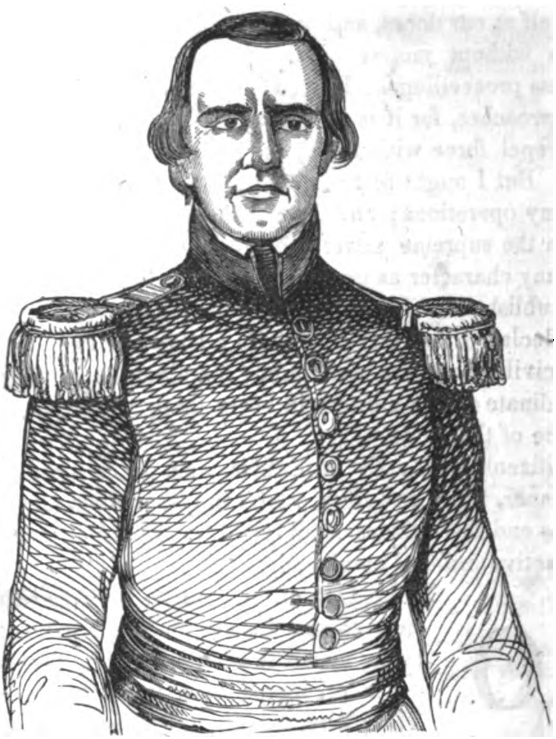
"It is declared that this place is in a state of siege

"The civil authorities and public functionaries, during the siege are subordinate to the military in every thing relating to the defence and service of the place.

"All citizens shall assist with their arms in the national defence, in the manner, time, and form, which the authorities may determine; and to this end the citizens shall yield to the advice and orders of their respective military commanders."

ON the 11th of September, the American camp at Seralvo was busy with preparations for the ensuing march to Monterey. In the evening the order of march was read to the companies. The pioneers were united into one party, under command of Captain Craig, and covered by McCulloch's rangers, and a squadron of dragoons. A day intervened between the march of each division, the 13th being appointed for the movement of the first one. Eight days' rations and forty rounds of ammunition were given to each soldier, and ample arrangements made to provide for casualties and other events incident to a military movement. The sick and wounded were left behind, together with a garrison of two companies from the Mississippi regiment.

Early on the 12th of September, the advance party marched for Marin. It was composed of McCulloch's rangers, Captain Graham's squadron of dragoons, and eighty pioneers—the whole commanded by Captain Craig. After proceeding about thirteen miles, they encamped for the night, at a small stream, whose cool, clear water formed a delicious relief after marching under a burning sun. At one o'clock of the following day, the party reached Papagayo. Here the enemy appeared in considerable force, and Captain Craig, feeling



Captain McCulloch.

his party inadequate to resist an attack, sent a despatch to hurry on the first division.

On the following day, Captain McCulloch, with forty rangers, was sent on a scouting expedition towards the town of Ramas. On the road, he had occasional skirmishes with parties of the enemy, and finally overtook a party of two hundred, at about a quarter of a mile from the town. A spirited firing commenced on both sides, when McCulloch, observing some wavering among the enemy, charged them at full speed. Both parties passed directly through the town, and the chase continued for six miles. One of the enemy was killed, one wounded, and one captured. The rangers then cautiously retraced their steps, and rejoined the advance, where they found General Taylor with the first division, he having effected a forced march during the previous twenty-four hours.

The march of the second division from Seralvo to Monterey, is graphically described by Reid. With some few alterations, his account is inserted.

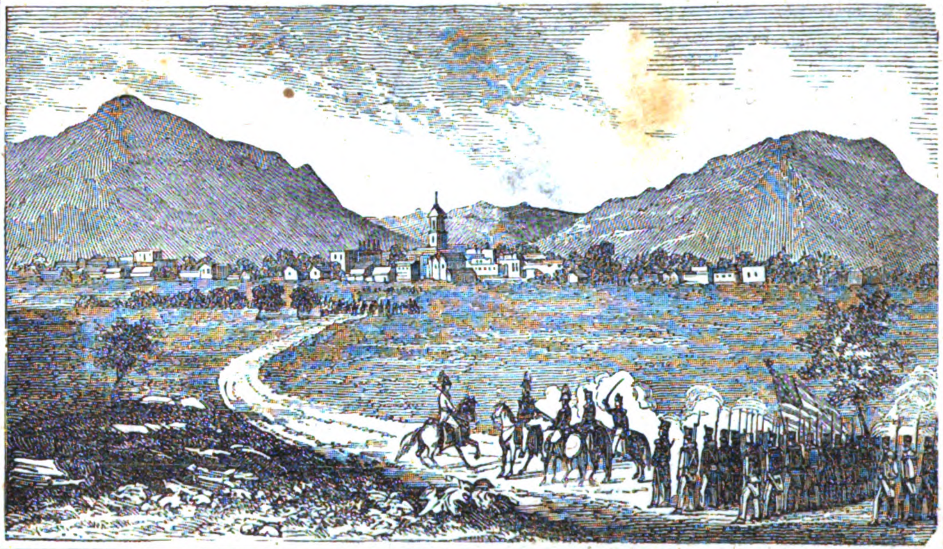
"Worth's division had just placed their personal clothing and accoutrements in convenient condition for packing, yesterday evening, when they were called out for inspection—orderlies, servants, and all, leaving their tents unattended. Just as General Worth appeared on the field, a heavy rain, accompanied with wind, commenced, and prostrating many of the tents, soaked every thing in camp. At two o'clock this morning, [September 14] the reveillé beat, and the poor fellows, with their clothes still wet, prepared to march. The tents were struck and packed, wagons were brought up to receive the tent poles, camp kettles, &c., private mules and pack-horses were harnessed, camp women, with children at the breast, and of all sizes, packed themselves and little ones on Mexican mules and ponies, and by daylight the column was in motion. The rear guard did not get off until eleven o'clock. The day has been exceedingly warm. We have marched twelve miles over a country different in every respect from any I have ever before seen. The shrubbery and plants are entirely new to me, with the exception of the cactus, which grows throughout Mexico in a hundred varieties. The wild olive, and a white, round-leafed shrub, with pink blossoms, cover the mountains and table-lands. We have crossed five or six clear cool streams to-day, and are now encamped upon the brow of a ravine, down which runs a spring brook.

"We are now (morning of the 15th) about fourteen miles from Marin. We passed a few moments since a rancho which had just been deserted in great haste—the cows, goats, and chickens having been left behind. We left camp this morning at four o'clock. Our way has led along the foot of a mountain, which rises on our right to a height of twenty-five hundred to three thousand feet. We likewise have a mountain on our left, of nearly the same height. These two mountains converge before us, and descend at the same time to about the level of the table lands upon which we now are. But far in the distance before us rises the Sierra Madre, higher and more majestic than any we have before seen. Our march to-day has been over a very bad road—up hill and down—over rocks and pebbles, ravines and mines. The whole country over which we have to-day travelled is covered with aged 'Spanish bayonet' trees—a species of palm, each leaf of which is pointed with a sharp thorn. Some of these trees are from two and a half to three feet in diameter, and must be from one hundred and fifty to two hundred years old. As we reached this camping place, an express came in from General Taylor, directing this division to join him at Marin by a forced march. We are therefore bivouacked ready to march at a moment's warning. It seems that the Mexicans are assembled in force between here and Monterey, and it is rumoured that Santa Anna himself is in the field.

There is no doubt about there being a strong force at Monterey, and General Taylor therefore directs that the first and second divisions shall join to-morrow, and march before the town. . . . . . . General Worth keeps his division always in readiness, so that he could hardly be surprised by night or day. Last night a sort of *stampede* occurred in camp, and we shall probably have another to-night. I cannot help thinking that if an alarm were to take place to-night, a most singular scene would follow. We are bivouacked in a thicket of trees, or large shrubs, all of which have thorns. To walk through them without stooping and dodging about to avoid the thorns is impossible. Horses and mules are tied by long lassoes in every direction. The whole thicket, as well as the road for half a mile, is filled with men stretched out on blankets, chatting about the probabilities of a fight. * * * * General Taylor arrives at Marin to-night, and will there consolidate his little army."

Before sunrise on the 15th of December, the army commenced its march for Marin. At ten o'clock the advance reached a hill overlooking the town, from whence could be seen a large body of the enemy's cavalry, ranged in the principal street. As the Americans numbered but twenty-five men, their captain, McCulloch, ordered a halt, and the men scattered themselves along the brow of the hill, in order to avoid any shot which the enemy might throw from the town. The place afforded every opportunity for the concealment of troops, the great plaza being hidden from sight by the church and adjoining buildings. After waiting for some time, the captain observed the lancers moving slowly off towards Monterey, and soon after his command took undisputed possession of the town.

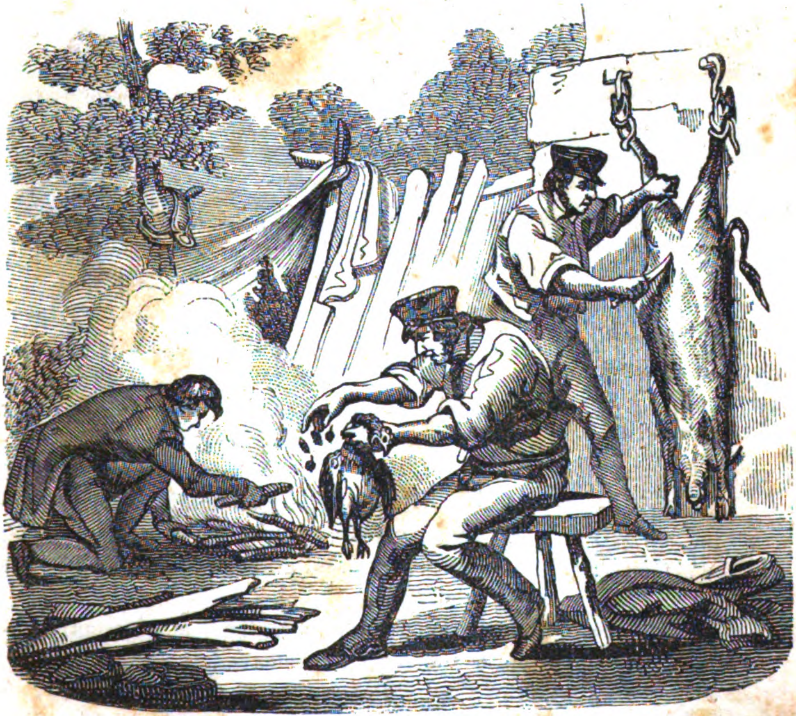
Marin is situated on elevated table-land, from which mountains soar up to a great height. It contains a church of white stone, and some handsome buildings. The former is surrounded with turrets and a steeple. A small stream of water runs through the south side of the town, but the inhabitants are supplied mostly by deep wells, in which the water is constantly cool and clear. The scenery is perhaps equal to that of any part of Mexico. "When within about a mile of Marin," says Reid, "the scenery that presented itself was magnificent in the extreme. On our right rose the tall peaks of the Sierra Alvo, about three thousand feet high, running nearly east and west, while before us were the towering peaks of the Sierra Madre, ranging north and south, of every shape, forming battlements, leaning towers, obelisks, and steeples, which seemed almost to pierce the heavens. Again, on our left, another chain of mountains reared their lofty summits towards the blue sky, the whole composing as it were a semi-circle, and presenting a scene of grandeur and surpassing



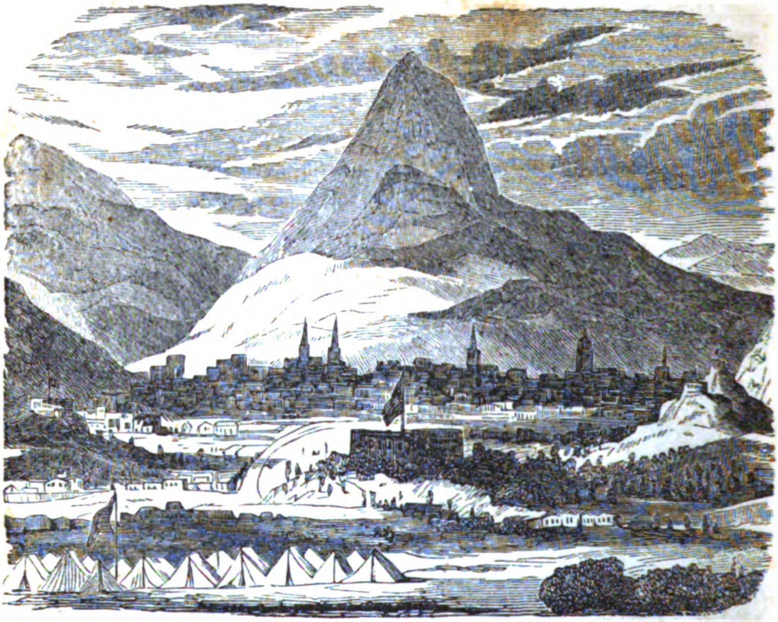
Americans marching to Marin.

beauty, which filled one with involuntary awe and admiration, while the soul became enwrapped and lost in contemplating the masterly works of nature."

On the 18th, the army reached the town of San Francisco, about eighty miles from Monterey; and on the next day arrived at the Walnut Springs, three miles from that city. Here General Taylor halted and prepared for one of the most remarkable sieges which it has ever fallen to the lot of a historian to record.



A Camp Kitchen.



Monterey.

CHAPTER XVI.

STORMING OF FEDERATION AND INDEPENDENCE HILLS.

BEFORE describing General Taylor's operations before Monterey, it seems proper to give a description of the town and its defences.

Monterey (king's mountain) is pleasantly situated at the commencement of the Sierra Madre, one of the boldest ranges of mountain scenery in Mexico. It is distant one hundred and fifty miles from Camargo, and perhaps eight hundred from the city of Mexico. The Arroyo San Juan, a branch of the river of that name, runs below the city; while on the opposite side is an extensive plain, covered with fields of maize and sugar-cane, and groves of apple, peach, orange, and citron trees. All the roads from the Rio Grande meet at this place, and after passing through the city unite in one which winds through a gorge towards Saltillo. North of the town is a ravine, running east and west for nearly a mile. The houses of Monterey are square in shape, generally two stories high, and constructed of a white stone very difficult to split. The walls are of great thickness, but on account of age some of the buildings are in a crumbling condition; and the city itself presents that sombre, venerable appearance, which is the invariable accompaniment of Moorish architecture. The plaza is large and beautiful, being inclosed in compact rows of houses, inhabited by merchants and the wealthy, independent citizens. Receding from this, the houses separate from each other, and diminish in size until towards the walls, where the whole presents the appearance of a widely scattered village. This rural region is interspersed with gardens and extensive fields, while long romantic looking lanes connect it with the city proper. This alternation of town and country affords agreeable recreation for the inhabitants, and renders Monterey one of the most healthy places in Mexico.

The principal street (calle de Monterey) runs from the Bishop's Palace, through the middle of the city, to the plaza of which it forms the south-west side. On this street is situated the magnificent country seat of General Arista—a beautiful white building, having the columns and cornices adorned with red. The halls and rooms are spacious, with high ceilings. In the general's former residence there, the garden was lined with groves of orange trees, which bordered flower-beds separated by beautiful flower-walks—while on each side were baths of running water, with various little ornaments placed here and there, making the whole a most delightful spot for recreation. The business portion of the city commences at the Plaza de Carne, on the north-east side of which is another fine street. On this is situated an academy and other buildings. The main Plaza is a large square having the streets on each side well paved. Each of the houses surrounding it has a garden inclosed by high stone walls, and filled with orange trees, vines, and other tropical fruits. The cathedral is a vast pile, irregularly built, and of no particular order of architecture. The front presents an imposing appearance, having its broad surface richly ornamented with elaborate stucco work. The interior is on an equally magnificent scale. The lofty pillars, wrought arched ceiling, paintings, and altars, softened by the dim light issuing from windows thirty feet from the floor, inspire the beholder with admiration and religious awe. There are several small altars, the ornaments of which are carved and gilded so as to present a very chaste appearance; but the main altar is the principal object of attention. It forms one huge piece of the richest carving and gilding, decorated with the heads of saints, full-length figures, angels, and other objects. During service, the effect of the whole is such as can be produced by few ceremonies besides those attending the Roman Catholic religion.

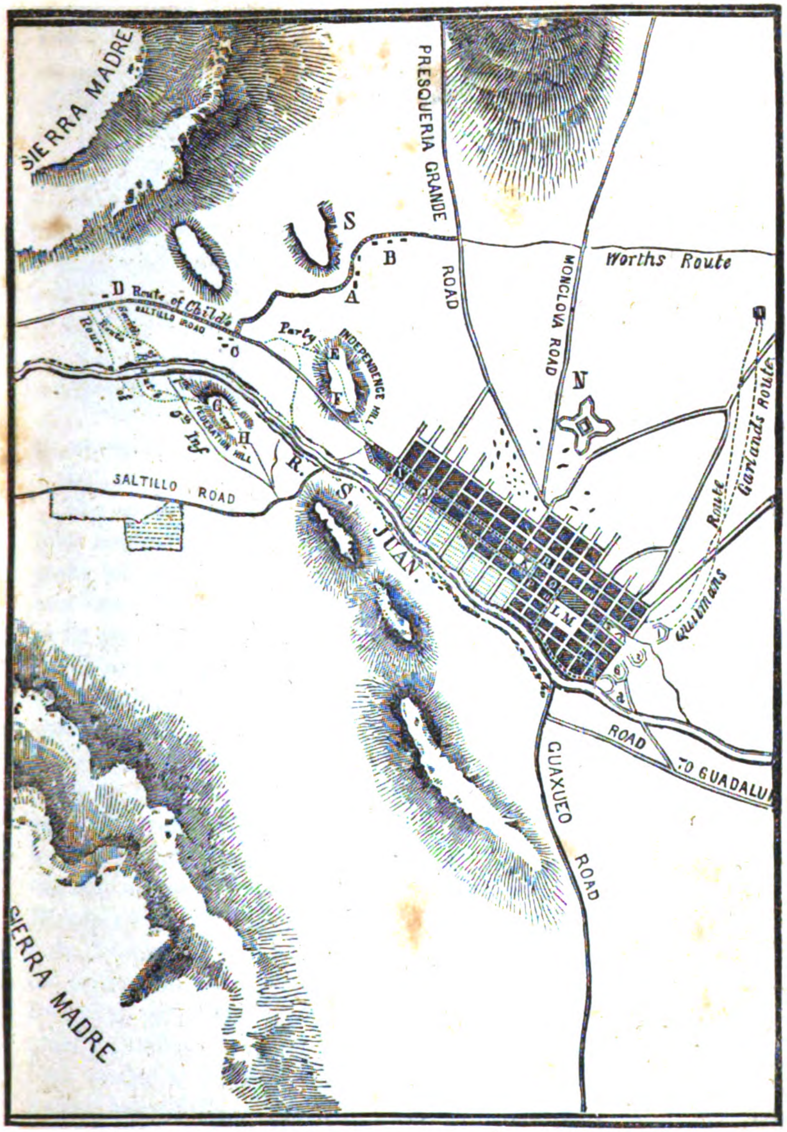
THE defences in and about Monterey were on a scale which justified the Mexicans in their belief that the city was impregnable. The eastern and southern approaches were commanded by seven principal works. These are enumerated by an eye-witness in the following order:

1. A strong redoubt of masonry, of four faces, with an open gorge of ten feet, prepared for four guns, overlooked and commanded by a large stone house in the rear, prepared with sand bags and loop-holes for infantry.
2. A strong redoubt of four faces, with an open gorge of twenty feet, prepared for three guns.
3. Masonry for infantry, and breastworks.
4. An unoccupied redoubt of one gun.
5. Tete-de-pont in front of the bridge of the Purissima, a strong work of masonry, mounting three guns.
6. A strong redoubt, masonry, with four guns, overlooking the approaches from Cadareyta, and commanding the gorge of the second redoubt.
7. A strong redoubt of masonry, for three guns, overlooked and commanded by a large stone house, prepared for infantry, with loop-holes and sand bags.

The works, with the exception of the first, were connected by breastworks of earth and brush, for infantry; thus forming one great fort. The barricades, of masonry, were twelve feet thick, and furnished with embrasures for guns. All the house-tops and garden walls of the city were loop-holed, and provided with sand bags for infantry defence.

The northern approaches were defended by the citadel, a large rectangular edifice, built of stone, and surrounded by an inclosed work of solid masonry, with four bastion fronts, mounting thirty-one guns. The western approaches [stormed by Worth's division] were overlooked by the Bishop's Palace, of four guns, a redoubt on Inde-

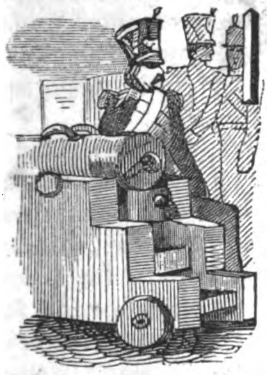
MONTEREY AND ITS APPROACHES.


SIERRA MADRE
PRESQUERIA GRANDE ROAD
Worths Route
MONCLOVA ROAD
S
B
A
D
Route of Childs
SALTILLO ROAD
O
Party
INDEPENDENCE HILL
E
F
G
H
FEDERATION HILL
5th Inf
Route
R. S. JUAN
SALTILLO ROAD
N
L M
Garlands Route
Quitmans Route
ROAD TO GUADALUP
GUAXUEO ROAD
SIERRA MADRE

REFERENCES.

- A. Mexican Ambuscade afternoon 20th September.
- B. Yard into which Mexicans fired on evening 20th.
- C. Charge of Mexican Lancers morning 21st.
- D. Position of 2d Division on 21st.
- E. Height stormed by Colonel Childs 22d.
- F. Bishop's Palace carried on 22d.
- G. Height stormed by Captain Smith's Party 21st.
- H. Redoubt stormed by General Smith 21st.
- I. Arista's House and Garden
- J. Church Cemetery, with loop-holes for musketry.
- K. Plaza de Carne.
- L. Small Plaza.
- M. Grand Plaza.
- P. Q. R Positions occupied by our troops morning 24th.
- 1. Redoubt four guns carried morning 21st.
- 2. Redoubt Fort Diablo three guns.
- 6. Redoubt four guns.

pendence hill, having two guns; a battery of two guns on Federation hill; and Fort Soldada, of one gun.



IN short, the whole city was one vast fortress. Batteries raked each principal street, which, uniting with the fires from roofs and houses, crossed and recrossed at every point. The walls were so thick as to render artillery almost useless; so that houses as well as forts were to be stormed with the bayonet, and immediately garrisoned, before the Americans could proceed successfully towards the heart of the city. Besides this, the road to the city lay through open cornfields, where the Americans were exposed to sweeping fires before they could get into a position to return a shot.

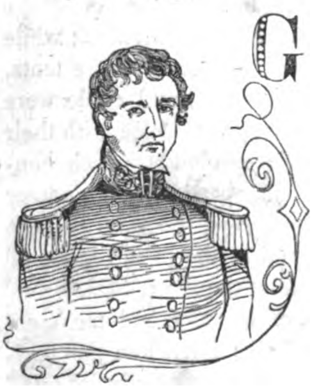
The appearance of Monterey and the surrounding region, as seen from the Walnut Springs, is graphically described by Reid:—"The scene before us was magnificent and sublime. There lay the rich and lovely valley of Monterey, a beautiful undulating plain, while, in its centre, between the Saddle mountain, and another chain of the Sierra del Madre, lay concealed the capital of Nueva Leon, the towering steeple of the cathedral alone being visible to mark its situation. Off to the right was the citadel, from whose battlements a flag occasionally flaunted to the breeze, and then hung in folds again, struggling as it were to maintain its proud display. To the left could be seen the avenues leading to the city, which were fortified by the batteries and other works of the enemy. Still farther to the right, in the rear of the city, stood, on a high hill overlooking the whole, the Bishop's Palace, displaying from its turrets the black cross of the holy church, and the green, white, and red banner of Mexico; while the tops of the adjacent heights were covered with snow-white tents. Beautiful green fields met the eye on either side, and cattle were quietly grazing about, while mountains on every hand rose with their high peaks to heaven, tipped with white fleecy clouds, which contrasted beautifully with the bright green of the base of those nearer by. Not a soul was to be seen, and the mountains, the vale, and the city, seemed alike undisturbed, and wrapped in the calm repose of nature. All was still, save the wild whistle of the forest bird."

After the army had arrived within sight of the city, a detachment of Mexican lancers was observed approaching; but when the regiment of Colonel Hays attempted to charge, they suddenly wheeled about and returned to the city. Instead of pursuing, Hays ordered a halt, and the object of the movement was soon apparent. The guns of the citadel suddenly opened with twelve-pound shot, which, had the rangers been within range, would have committed fearful execution in their party. This the keen eye of Hays had foreseen; and consequently he restrained the impetuosity of his troops, and thereby baffled the efforts of the enemy.

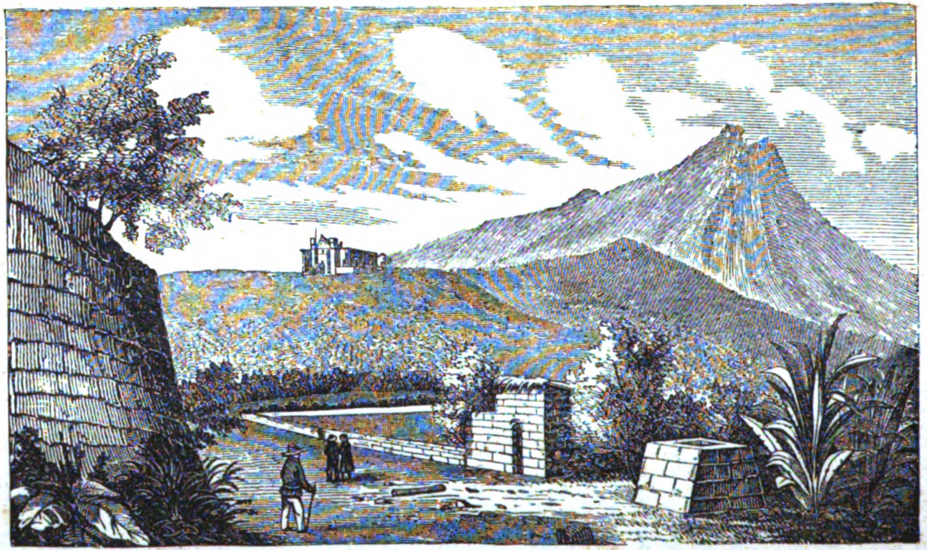
Meanwhile, General Taylor and staff, with Major Mansfield and a party of engineers, had proceeded to the right, in order to make an examination of the enemy's works, when a ball struck within about twenty feet of the general, and bounded towards the group, showing that the enemy had got the range with their guns. The troops marched and counter-marched in front of the enemy's batteries for nearly two hours, while balls were ploughing up the ground near them. In the afternoon, the whole army encamped at the Walnut Springs. During the night, about thirty of the enemy were captured.

After a careful reconnoissance of the principal defences of the city, the American commander was convinced, that, instead of attacking the front with his whole army, it would be necessary for him to gain the enemy's rear, and carry the positions to the west, thus giving the army two chances of success.

Founding the plan of attacking on these views, the general made preparations to gain the Saltillo road, intrusting the command of the expedition to General Worth. That officer was to march, by a circuitous route, around the hill of the Bishop's Palace, and carry the heights or detached works in the enemy's rear. His division consisted of two brigades. The first, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Staniford, was composed of Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan's battery of horse artillery, Lieutenant-Colonel Child's artillery battalion, including six companies and a regiment of infantry.



GENERAL PERSIFER F. SMITH'S brigade, (the 2d,) consisted of Lieutenant McCall's battery of horse artillery, the 5th infantry, to which was attached Captain Blanchard's company of Louisiana volunteers, under Major Martin Scott, and the 7th infantry under Captain Miles. Colonel Hays's regiment of mounted Texas rangers also accompanied the division, which numbered altogether about two thousand men. These were in a high state of discipline, and both the general and his division were eager to meet the enemy.



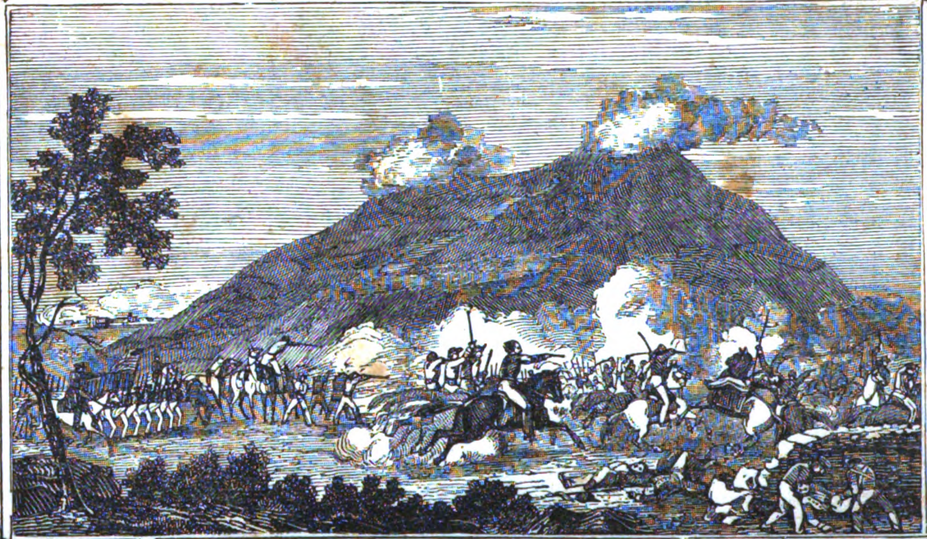
Bishop's Palace, Monterey.

COLONEL HAYS'S regiment was ordered at nine o'clock A. M., to hold itself in readiness for marching. They moved at noon, advancing slowly towards some corn-fields. The enemy soon perceived the movement, and detached large bodies of infantry from the Bishop's Palace to the height above it. To divert their attention, General Taylor threw the 1st and 3d divisions towards the city, a stratagem which enabled Hays's command to reach the Pescaria Grande road without interruption. At this place, the tents of the enemy on Independence Hill could be plainly perceived.

Meanwhile, General Burleson of Texas, with about twenty men, proceeded along the base of the hill, while Colonel Hays and Lieutenant-Colonels Duncan and Walker, with Captain McCulloch and Colonel Peyton, late of the Louisiana volunteers, ascended the hill to reconnoiter. Worth also ascended. Soon after, General Burleson rode up, and reported that a large force of both infantry and cavalry was approaching, for the purpose of disputing the passage. General Worth now joined the other officers, and immediately gave orders for a detachment of McCulloch's company to join that of Gillespie, in a careful reconnoissance of the hill. While this was being made, Colonel Hays fell in with an ambush of the enemy, who opened upon him with musket and escopet balls, followed by shells and shot from Fort Independence. Hays having with him only about thirty men, ordered a retreat; but many of the party's horses became unmanageable, in consequence of the bursting of shells. This caused much confusion, and several of the rangers were for awhile in imminent danger; but eventually all rejoined the main army. The colonel had a second skirmish with the Mexicans immediately after sundown. The advance were not able to regain camp, and passed the night without fire or blankets, exposed to a chilling rain.

Early on the morning of the 21st, the troops were ordered under arms, and without stopping to breakfast, began their march. The rangers were in advance as on the previous day, followed by the remainder of the division in battle array. After proceeding about a mile and a half, they reached a turn in the road, near the hacienda of San Jeronimo, which brought them in full view of the enemy's forces, drawn up for action, to the number of about fifteen hundred. Hays immediately ordered his company to deploy to the right, and dismount. He was supported by Duncan's battery and the light companies of Scott and Smith. The enemy opened their first fire, in which they were joined by the battery of Independence Hill. The rangers answered by a rapid fire from their rifles. The Mexicans then prepared to charge; and Captain McCulloch being separated from the remainder of the regiment was obliged to receive the entire shock. Then ensued a scene, which in rapidity of movement and individual daring has not been surpassed by any battle of the Mexican war. The appearance of the enemy was highly military, men and horses being gaily caparisoned, and their long lances decorated with pennons of green and red, which fluttered gracefully in the morning sun. "On they came," says Reid, who participated in the action, "at a full gallop, led by their brave Lieutenant-Colonel Juan N. Najera. McCulloch received them with a leaden rain, from rifles, pistols, and shot-guns, while the Texans at the fence poured in upon them a deadly fire. The clash was great, and at the shock the host moved to and fro as the forest bends before the storm; but our horses were too powerful to be overcome, and many of the enemy's bravest men were borne from their saddles. We saw their lieutenant-colonel fall while in the thickest of the fight, and exhorting his men to rally and stand firm. He was a tall, splendid looking officer, with a fierce moustache, and beautiful teeth, which were set hard, and with his other features evinced the most marked determination.

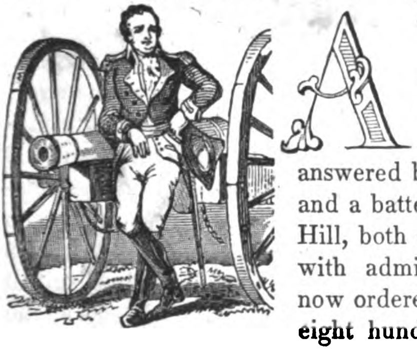
"McCulloch's men were now engaged hand to hand with the enemy's lancers, using their revolvers, while some few beat back the enemy with their swords. Meanwhile the light companies and Duncan's artillery had opened their fire, and the enemy was borne back with great slaughter, carrying with them a portion of McCulloch's men, who had fought their way nearly to the enemy's centre, and seeing their peril, were fighting to get back. Then it was that the hardest struggle took place. Armstrong, one of our company, was unhorsed by a lancer, having received two wounds; yet, on foot, with sword in hand, he defended himself against two of the enemy. He killed one, and the other was shot by a comrade. * * * * * McCulloch had been twice borne back by the Mexicans, and, making a desperate struggle to regain his company, he put his horse at full speed, ran down all opposition, and regained his command without injury. The Mexicans had taken to the hills, and the regular skirmishers or light companies, under Captains Smith and Scott, continued their fire over our heads, killing by accident one of the rangers. About this time Captain Gutierrez, of the enemy's cavalry, who had received three wounds, was also killed; he died, fighting to the last, one of the most courageous of his race. As the Mexicans gave way, the light companies rushed up the hill, firing over the ridge at the



Cavalry Action, September 21st.

retiring enemy, who fled in every direction. Parties of our infantry, who had gained the corn-fields, were also picking off the Mexican infantry, who were rapidly retreating in the road leading to the city. The Texans also poured upon them a destructive fire, and in several instances both horse and rider were seen to bound some feet into the air, and then fall together down the hill.

"This most brilliant action lasted about fifteen minutes, during which time one hundred and fifty of the enemy were killed and wounded, while on our part the loss was trifling. Several of McCulloch's men were severely wounded by the enemy's lancers, but our regiment had only one killed. The squadron which so bravely charged McCulloch were nearly all cut to pieces. Amid the scene of carnage lay stretched out some of their bravest men, in gaudy uniforms; and many a broken lance lay here and there, while the road and hill-side were lined with their dead horses, beautifully caparisoned, the saddles ornamented with silver mountings, presenting a wild and ghastly scene. Thirty-two of their dead were buried in one pit."



AFTER the enemy's defeat, Duncan's and McCall's artillery was posted on the Saltillo road, and opened a fire upon some works on Independence Hill. It was answered by a nine-pounder from the hill, and a battery of two guns from Federation Hill, both of which the Mexicans served with admirable effect: General Worth now ordered his command to march about eight hundred yards farther, to a position where they would have a full view of the enemy's fortifications. In effecting this movement Captain McKavett was killed, and a private wounded.

On the previous evening, Worth had despatched a note to General Taylor, suggesting a manœuver on the part of the commander to favour the intended attack upon the Bishop's Palace. This was done early on the 21st. The infantry and artillery of the 1st division, and the field division of volunteers, were ordered under arms, and moved towards the city; while the 2d dragoons, under May, and Colonel Wood's regiment of Texas mounted volunteers, under General Henderson, were directed to the right to support General Worth, if necessary, and to make an impression, if practicable, upon the upper quarter of the city.

Before detailing Worth's operations, it may be proper to describe his position, relative to both the Mexican redoubts and General Taylor's camp. The 2d division had marched from the Walnut Springs, on the main road, [two o'clock, P. M., of the 20th,] and after moving nearly directly west, and crossing the Monclova and Pescaria roads above the city, the troops reached a hill, on which they encamped for the night. Near this was the Mexican ambuscade of September 20th, from which was detached the party that skirmished in the evening. Early on the 21st they reached, by a south-westerly course, the Saltillo road, where the charge of cavalry took place. After the repulse of the Mexicans, Worth moved the troops nearly twelve hundred yards along the road, and prepared for assaulting the works.

This position led directly to the city, which lay south-east at a distance of perhaps twenty-five hundred yards. Between General Worth and the nearest point to the town arose Independence Hill, defended by the Bishop's Palace, and a redoubt, both commanding the road. South of the Saltillo road, and running parallel to it, is the Arroyo San Juan, a small stream branching from the main river of that name. South of the stream, and bordering upon it, is Federation Hill, defended by Fort Soldada and another work.

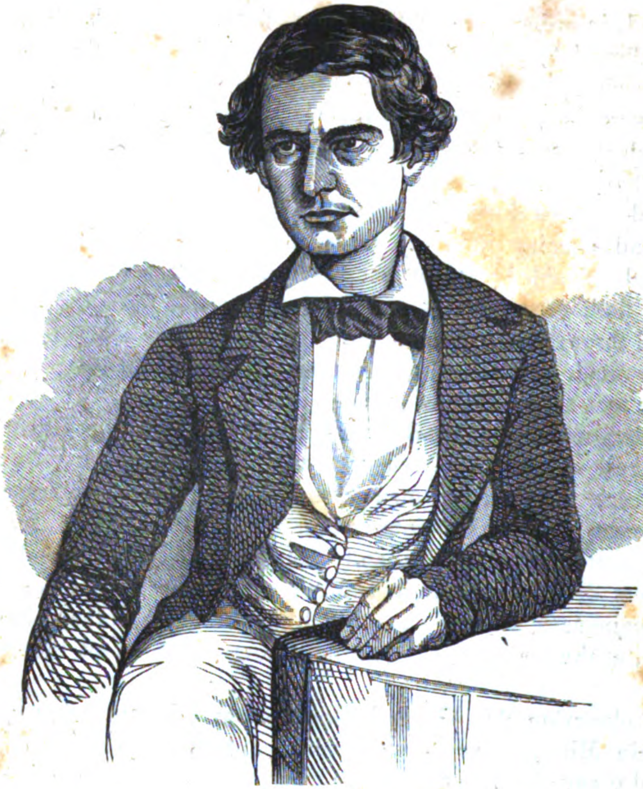
THUS Worth was completely isolated from the main portion of the army, except through the route by which he came. To reach Monterey, and act in conjunction with the commanding general, it was necessary to storm an almost impregnable fortress, to march along roads swept by galling fires, and at the same time to keep in check large bodies of cavalry and infantry, posted at advantageous positions in the open country. Besides this, a large force might, at any time, approach from Saltillo and cut off all retreat; an event which would render any attempt to force a way back extremely critical. Worth's duties were peculiar and arduous; on their issue depended his fame as a soldier, the safety of his division, and perhaps the final result of the operations against Monterey.

As the forts on Federation Hill lay nearest his position, Worth determined on attacking them first. He accordingly despatched, for this purpose, Captain Smith, with three hundred men, composing six companies of Texas rangers, and three of the artillery battalion. At noon, while the troops stood ready to march, Worth rode along their front, and, by a few words, nerved each heart to its apparently desperate task. Soon after they were slowly moving along the Saltillo road, towards extensive fields of corn and sugar cane. These they entered, in order to screen their march from the enemy's observation, and falling into single file, proceeded rapidly towards the river. Before reaching it, the roar of cannon from the hill gave notice that they were observed, and that the remainder of their march must be through sheets of deadly fire. But, animated by their intrepid captain, they paused not for a moment, but, reaching the water's edge, dashed in waist deep, while cannon shot and musketry were plunging and foaming in every direction. At this moment the firing seemed redoubled; the brow of the hill was lost in dense smoke, while flash after flash of quick flame, followed by rattling volleys, glared through the gloom.. Through this terrible storm the Americans rushed, and gained the opposite bank without loss; a circumstance that appears almost miraculous.

Federation Hill is nearly four hundred feet high, very steep, and at its base almost entirely covered with dense chaparral. On reaching these thickets, the men were halted in order to prepare for the ascent. During this interval, large reinforcements of Mexicans were poured into the fort, and companies of infantry and sharpshooters descended from it, and stationed themselves along ledges and eminences. These were to gall the assailants as they advanced, while, at the same time, the artillery from above swept the road in front.

On observing this, General Worth ordered the 7th infantry, under Captain Miles, to support Captain Smith, by a movement which would divert the attention of the enemy. Taking the direct road to the hill, Miles came within range of the Mexican fire before Captain Smith, and after a short skirmish at the foot of the hill, during which he firmly maintained his position, halted and awaited the arrival of the first detachment. The two commands were soon joined, and having reached the hill-side, were secure from the artillery, which could not be inclined so as to reach them.

THE party now commenced the ascent. Gradually the enemy's musketry opened upon them, and was answered by the Texan rifle. As the troops swept on, the battle grew louder and more exciting. One detachment of the Mexicans followed another down the cliffs to convenient places for harassing the assailants. A dark ring of smoke settled around the centre of the hill, and at length volley after volley of rattling fire-arms, the shouts of combatants, the hurry of marching, and dashing of cavalry, bounding and echoing along the slope, told that the action had reached its height. After a



Colonel Hays.

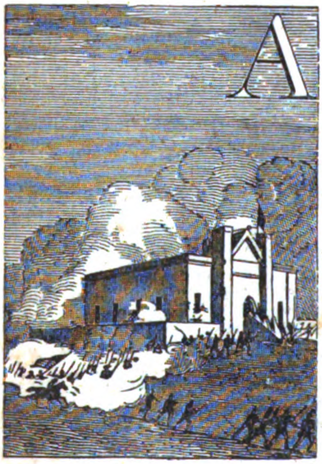
fierce struggle the enemy began to give way, and soon they were in slow retreat up the hill, followed by the shouting Americans. As the latter neared the fort, the terrified garrison shrunk before them; and soon the advance rushed through its gates, tore down the colours and erected the American flag. A shout of victory went up from every voice, and was answered by joyful spectators near General Worth. A nine-pounder was captured, which had been overturned by the enemy for the purpose of throwing it down the hill.

The enemy retreated to Fort Soldada; and Worth ordered General Smith, with the 5th regiment and a party of Texas rangers, under Colonel Hays, to assist Captain Smith in taking it. The combined forces rushed along the sides of the hill, with deafening cheers, drove all opposition before them, and entered almost simultaneously into the fort. The enemy had not yet evacuated it, when the colours of the 5th infantry were planted on the walls, followed almost immediately by those of the 7th. One nine-pounder was captured, to gether with mules, camp equipage, and ammunition. The garrison was computed at fifteen hundred, and its loss was severe. The Americans had eighteen wounded—two mortally. The guns of both forts were immediately turned upon the Bishop's Palace, which was separated by a valley of several hundred yards width. The evening was dark and chilly; and soon after the troops lay down, rain commenced pouring in torrents, attended by heavy thunder and lightning. Exposed to this storm, without food or shelter, lay the weary assailants of Federation Hill, during the night of the 21st.

Severe as had been the labours of this day, they were understood by all to be but the prelude of more terrible ones on the following day. The heights on Independence Hill were still occupied by the enemy, and the works by which it was surrounded were to all appearances impregnable. The hill itself is between seven and eight hundred feet high, and not only the most inaccessible height from its almost perpendicular ascent—covered as it is with ledges of rock, some four or five feet high, and low, thick, thorny bushes—but also the most important, as commanding all the western approaches, and by a gradual descent from the crest of the hill of about three hundred and fifty or four hundred yards, south-east course along the ridge, leading to the Bishop's Palace, which it also commands and overlooks, thus forming a key to the entrance of Monterey on the western side. The height was defended by a piece of artillery, and during the night a large reinforcement had been thrown forward from the Bishop's Palace.

The troops destined to carry these heights were roused from sleep at three A. M. of the 22d. The thunder-storm of the previous evening still lingered, the sky was concealed by a curtain of clouds, and a dense mist pervaded the atmosphere. This circumstance was favourable to the Americans, as their main hope lay in surprising the enemy. Their party consisted of three companies of the artillery battalion; three companies of the 8th infantry, and seven companies of the Texas rangers, under Hays and Walker. The whole, exclusive of the officers, numbered four hundred and sixty-five men, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Childs.

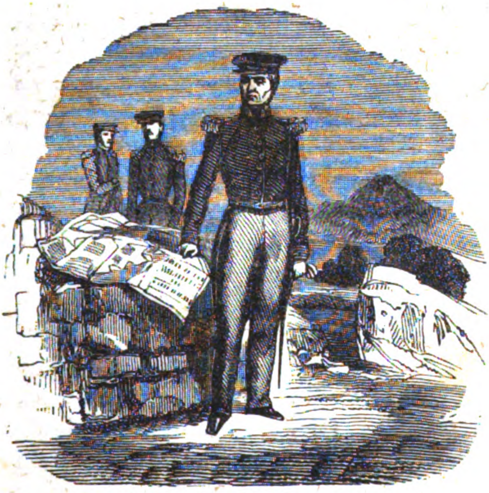
Very soon after being formed, the Americans commenced their march, moving in column, until they reached the base of the hill. Then Captain Vinton, with a company of the 3d artillery, one of the 8th, and three companies of rangers under Walker, was detached to move as a left column up the north-west slope of the hill, while the remainder of the command, under their colonel, ascended on the south-west. The ascent was steep and difficult; but the assailants pushed forward vigorously, until within about one hundred yards of the summit. Here a loud discharge announced that they were discovered; and as they pressed onward the noise grew with their advance until the hill rocked with the stunning peals. On reaching the fort, a short but fierce struggle ensued, which terminated in the utter discomfiture of the garrison. The fugitives fled towards the Bishop's Palace, carrying with them a piece of cannon. The Americans on account of their exhausted condition did not pursue. During the ascent, two of their noblest spirits had fallen. Captain R. A. Gillespie, and Herman S. Thomas, of the rangers. The former had been the first man to enter Fort Soldada on the previous day.



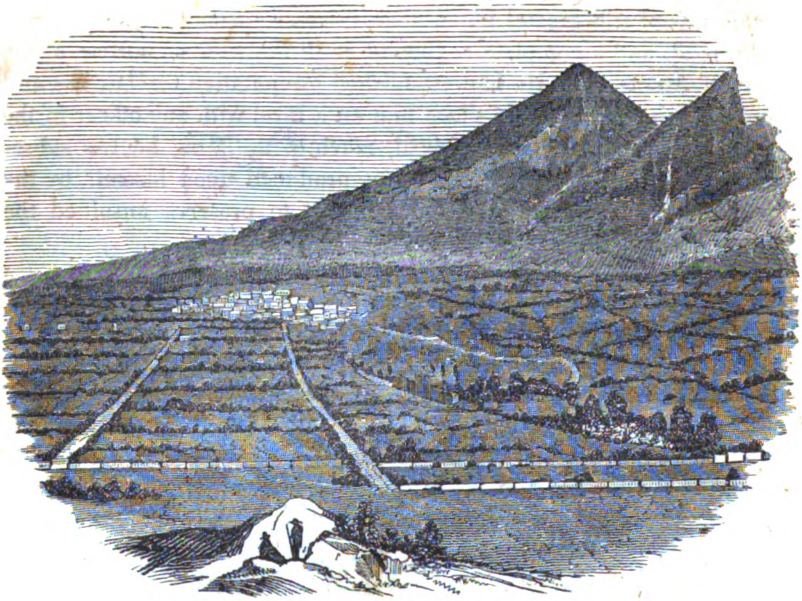
A FAVOURABLE position to play upon the palace was now taken by Lieutenant Roland, who opened his howitzer upon that pile with terrible effect. While this was going on, the advance was increased to six companies, and placed under charge of Captain Vinton. That skilful officer so disposed his troops as to provoke the enemy to sally upon his line, in which case he designed a bayonet charge, which would throw them into such confusion as would enable his men to enter the Palace with them. The event answered his expectation. A heavy Mexican force poured from the works, and, forming in front of the principal gate, came down in one dense mass on the American infantry. The latter poured in a heavy fire, followed soon by the murderous rifle blast of the Texas rangers. Then followed the charge. The Mexicans were broken and chased down the sides of the hill in wild disorder; while the victors, rushing forward with loud shouts, entered the Palace before the gates could be closed. A short struggle ensued within the walls; but it ended, and the noise of battle gave way to the shout of victory. The Bishop's Palace was gained.

In this assault the Americans lost six killed and fifteen wounded; the enemy one hundred and eighty. The whole division, except the Texas rangers, moved up to the Palace, and spent the night within its walls. During the evening, the troops were employed in taking care of the wounded—the enemy's as well as their own.

Thus by a series of well planned and brilliant movements, in the face of obstacles which at first appeared insurmountable, General Worth had obtained full possession of three of the enemy's batteries, the stronghold of the Bishop's Palace, seven pieces of artillery, two standards, a large quantity of ammunition and intrenching tools, and what was of still greater importance, the entire occupation of the Saltillo road, and a complete command of all the western portion of the city of Monterey. He had established a reputation for bravery and generalship which would place him on a level with any officer in the army of occupation; and, indeed, much of the fame he has subsequently won, is owing to the effect produced upon himself by the operations at Monterey, and his anxiety to preserve unsullied the laurels which he there won.



General Worth at Monterey.



Monterey from the Bishop's Palace.

CHAPTER XVII.

STORMING OF MONTEREY.

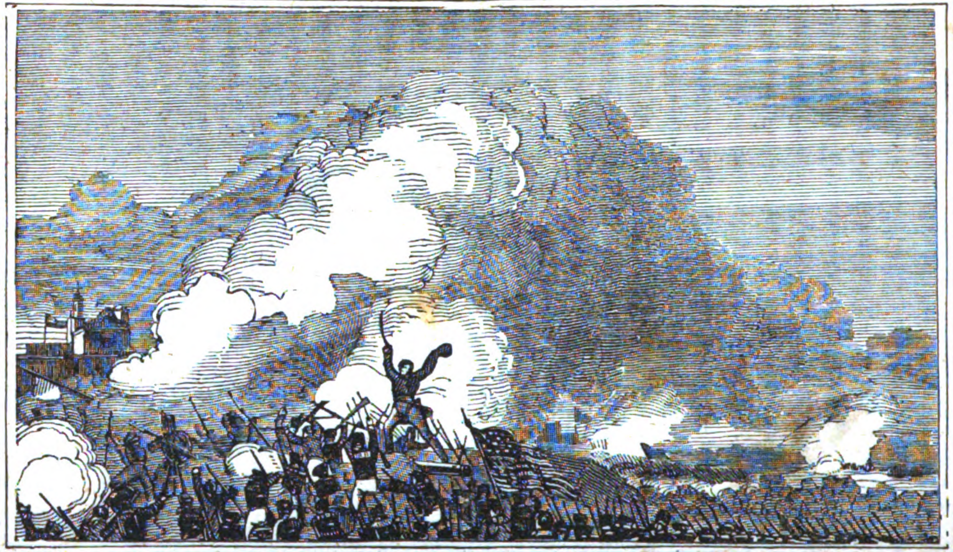
A GENERAL description of the defences of Monterey has already been given. It may not be uninteresting to recapitulate and specify more particularly, the principal points attacked by the first and third divisions of the American army.

The southern portion of the city is washed by the Arroyo San Juan, while the northern spreads out into open country. The east and west boundaries are parallel, running north-east. At the northern extremity of a street which runs through the centre of the city, meet the Pescaria, Monclova, and Marin roads. Between the two latter, some distance north of the city proper, is the citadel, a large quadrangular structure, built of stone, very strong, and commanding all the approaches to Monterey on the north. At the north-east extremity of the city enters the Guadalupe road. A little south of this, and in advance of the eastern wall, is Fort Teneria, mounting four guns; below this, Fort El Diablo, three guns, and still further south, other redoubts and lines of barricades. All these were to be carried before the Americans could, with security, commence their operations against the city proper.

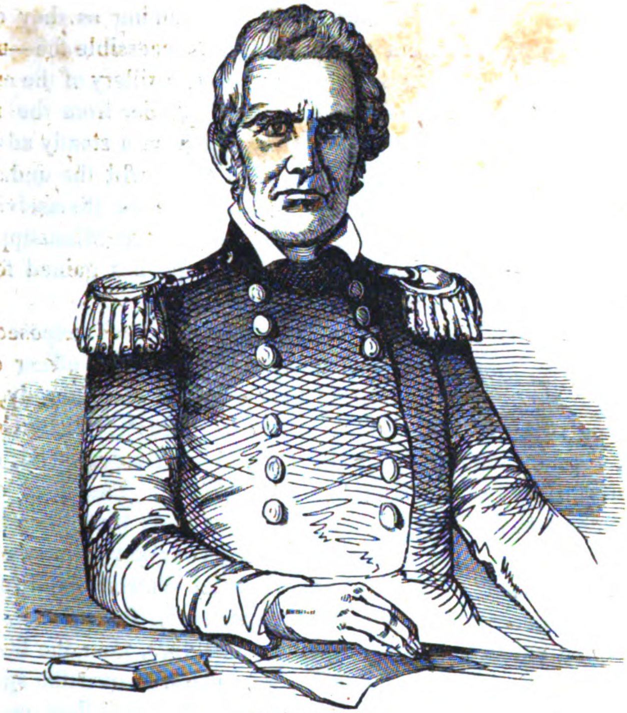
On the night of the 20th, General Taylor placed in battery on the Marin road, a ten inch mortar, and two twenty-four pound howitzers, to open upon the town and citadel on the following morning, so as to favour the movement of the second division. On the 21st, after a camp guard of one company from each regiment had been appointed, the army, numbering thirty-five hundred, marched from camp towards the mortar battery. Here May's dragoons and the Texas rangers, under General Henderson, were thrown to the right, to reinforce Worth if necessary. A command of six hundred and forty-nine men, consisting of two regiments and a battalion, was placed under direction of Colonel Garland, for the purpose of diverting the garrison, and if possible carrying one of the strong holds. Accompanying this force, was the light artillery battery of Captain Bragg, and Major Mansfield, Captain Williams, and Lieutenant Pope of the engineers. Moving in a south-westerly direction, Colonel Garland crossed the Guadalupe road, and reached a secure place near the city, where he halted. Major Mansfield and Lieutenant Pope were sent in advance with two companies to make a reconnoissance. They had proceeded but a little distance, when they were fired upon from Fort Teneria; and immediately after a large body of lancers began skirmishing with muskets. To support the detachment, Garland pushed forward with his whole command, through a double fire from the fort and citadel, and was soon engaged with the lancers. Captain Bragg was ordered forward, and moving at full gallop through a terrible fire, he reached a narrow lane, and opened his artillery upon the fort and barricades. In answer to this, all the enemy's forts poured forth a terrific cannonade of grape, canister, and round shot, and the Americans melted away by scores. Amid this shower of death, the Americans rushed forward, until their loss became so great that the major was obliged to order a retreat. He himself was wounded, and scarcely an officer of the 3d regiment escaped unhurt. Among the most distinguished of those who fell, were Major Lear, commanding the 3d infantry, Major Barbour, Captains Field and Williams, and Lieutenant Irwin. In the retreat, Captain Bragg lost several men, besides four horses killed and seven wounded. Fortunately, Captain Backus, of the 1st infantry, gained with his company a stone tannery, the roof of which looked directly into the gorge of Fort Teneria, at a distance of two hundred yards. From this his men poured a most destructive fire into the redoubt, and the building in its rear, thus contributing in no little degree to the capture of those places.

Meanwhile, being apprized of the struggle with Colonel Garland, General Taylor sent to his assistance a reinforcement, consisting of the Ohio regiment, under Colonel Mitchell, a portion of Hamer's brigade, under Colonel Campbell, and Colonel Davis's Mississippians—the whole under the direction of General Butler. This officer despatched General Quitman with the Mississippi brigade and that of General Hamer, in the direction of the city, and then advanced cautiously towards the scene of conflict. Here he soon became exposed to the enemy's fire, and after advancing a few squares, he met Major Mansfield, and received from him information of the failure of his attack. The major advised an immediate retreat. Butler communicated this to the commanding general, who ordered him to fall back; but soon after, on information being received that General Quitman had stormed a strong battery and a stone house, the order was withdrawn.

On leaving General Butler, General Quitman had marched towards Fort Teneria, through a fire from all the enemy's positions, more terrible than any which the Americans had yet witnessed. Musketry, grape, canister, and round shot swept every lane and avenue, rattling over the stony pavements, and crossing in whirling streams at every corner. The ground rocked and heaved as though in the convulsion of an earthquake. The heavy discharges fell on the stunned ear without intermission, and thick folds of smoke rolled up like mountains towards heaven, lighted only by the lurid flashes of cannon. Amid this fearful storm, where the voice of command was drowned in that of death and havoc, Quitman moved forward his staggering lines, which thinned and opened at every step. Four companies of the 4th infantry lost one-third of their officers and men by a single discharge, and fell back on the rear. But the passions of the Americans were wound to the highest pitch, and throwing down every impediment, they rushed with loud shouts towards the fort. Gradually the column became enveloped and lost in smoke, which, lifting occasionally, again displayed the troops moving rapidly up to the cannon's mouth. On arriving within three hundred yards, they opened a fire from their rifles, which continued half an hour. The Mexicans, sure of victory, now flung forth a new flag, and poured forth their showers of grape and musketry with unintermitted rapidity.



Storming of Fort Teneria



General Butler.

At sight of this defiance, Lieutenant-Colonel McClung shouted the word "charge," and in the same moment the stern voice of Colonel Davis was heard echoing it along his line. Breasting the withering storm, the command rushed forward, over dead and falling, and came like an avalanche upon the fort. McClung, sword in hand, leaped the ditch, mounted the wall, and with one more step was hand to hand with his foe. A tide of exasperated warriors poured after him, and in a few minutes their wild shouts, soaring above the pealing of cannon, told of the hard-earned victory. The Mexicans took refuge in a strong building, known as the distillery, whence they opened a fire of musketry; but this was speedily captured by Lieutenant-Colonel McClung. Five pieces of artillery were captured, a quantity of ammunition, and thirty prisoners, including three officers. McClung being severely wounded, Colonel Davis assumed command, and led the brigade towards Fort Diablo, until recalled by General Quitman.

Thus, after a most desperate and bloody conflict of more than two hours, was one of the enemy's strong holds carried by storm, notwithstanding the obstinate resistance they maintained. Considering that it was the first time that the troops of General Butler's division were ever brought into action—sustaining as they did, a desperate struggle against a sheltered and inaccessible foe—unprotected and bared to the storm of the murderous artillery of the enemy, which, although it swept one-fifth of their number from the ranks, could not cause them to shrink for an instant from a steady advance, their conduct on this occasion proves to the world the undaunted gallantry of our citizen soldiers, who have won for themselves the reputation of veteran troops. The charge led by the Mississippi rifle regiment upon Fort Teneria, without bayonets, has gained for the state a triumph which stands unparalleled.

Meanwhile Colonel Garland's command had been exposed to a destructive fire from the second and third forts. An officer of the Baltimore battalion thus describes the operations of that body, prior to its being ordered by Major Mansfield to retire:* "I saw Colonel Watson shouting, but it was impossible to hear a command, owing to the deafening roar of cannon and musketry. The head of our column changed its direction, and I knew at once that the point of attack was changed, and ran in front of my company to intercept the head of my column. I reached it as Colonel Watson was dismounting from his horse, which the next moment fell from a shot. The colonel cried out to his men—'Shelter yourselves, men, the best way you can.' At this time the battalion was scattered over the space of about an acre, the men lying down. At first the shot flew over their heads, but the guns were soon depressed so as to take effect.

"I was lying close to Colonel Watson, along-side of a hedge, when he jumped up, exclaiming, 'Now is the time, follow me.' We were now in a street or lane, with a few houses on either side, and within a hundred yards of three batteries, which completely raked it, in addition to which, two twelve-pound guns were planted in the castle on the right, and completely enfiladed the whole distance we had to make. Add to this the musketeers on the housetops, in the barricades at the head of the street up which we advanced, and at every cross street, and some idea may be formed of the deluge of balls poured upon us. Men and horses fell at every step of our advance. Cheers, shrieks, groans, and shouts of command added to the din, and uniting with the roar of cannon, became absolutely deafening.

"We had advanced up the street under this awful and fatal fire nearly two hundred yards, when we reached a cross street, at the corner of which, all who had succeeded in getting thus far, halted, as if by mutual consent. While shaking Colonel Watson by the hand, as he complimented me, a shower of grape, round, and canister shot

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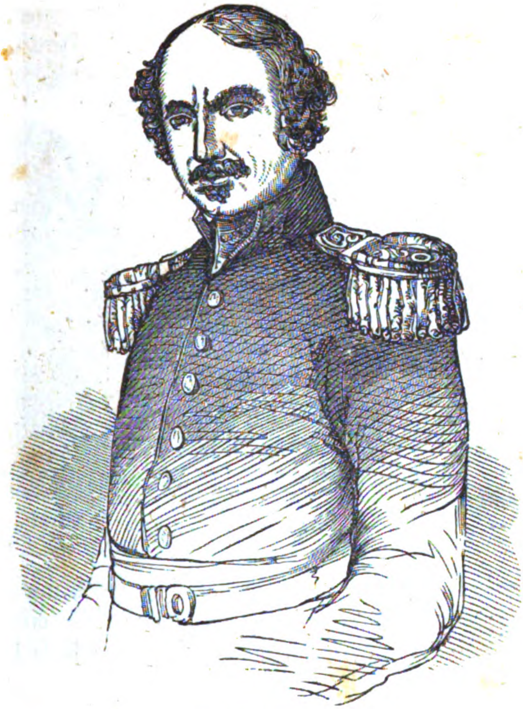
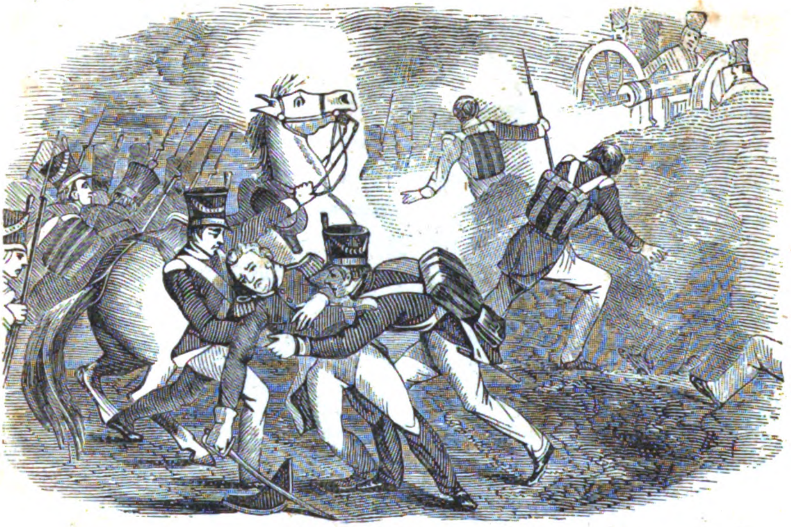
* The style of description differs from the original.



Colonel Watson.

came from the corner above, cutting down five officers, and I know not how many privates. Each man sought some place of apparent shelter. I sat down on the ground, with my back to the wall of a house. On my left were two men, nearly torn to pieces. One of them was lying flat on his back, with his legs extending farther into the street than mine. A shower of grape came crashing along and tore one of his wounded legs nearly off. He reared up, shrieked, and fell back dead. I did not move, satisfied that one place was as safe as another. In a few minutes I saw Hart, our colour sergeant, pass us with his right arm shattered; and he was followed by one of the colour guards, bearing our battalion flag—the first American flag in the city of Monterey. * * * * The firing still continued without the slightest intermission, whilst we remained at this memorable corner, which was, perhaps, for fifteen minutes. * * * * I was ordered to shelter my men from the fire, and await further orders; and leading them into the ditch, I clambered over the ramparts to observe what was going on. My appearance was greeted with about a dozen musket balls, which greatly accelerated a retrograde movement, and



General Butler wounded.

I sat down quietly with ten feet of ground between me and the enemy's shot. It was the first spot I had been in for more than two hours, that afforded security to the men. It was here I learned the death of Colonel Watson.

"We had been there for about a quarter of an hour when Captain Ridgely's battery came up to shelter itself. Its appearance was the signal for the castle to open upon us, the fire from which killed one of the horses and wounded a man. Being ordered to support Captain Bragg in his efforts to cut off some lancers, we succeeded in killing six of them, and driving the others back to the city."

During this time, General Butler's command was engaged in a spirited struggle with the enemy. Hearing of the capture of Fort Teneria, he had led his command against El Diablo, moving through a most destructive fire to within one hundred yards of that work. Here the converging fires from the different batteries swept through their ranks, while flanking fires of musketry poured forth deadly showers, which covered the space through which the Americans had still to pass. General Butler was severely wounded in the leg, but would not retire until he was exhausted through loss of blood, when the command devolved on Brigadier-General Hamer. On finding the fort stronger than had been anticipated, this officer withdrew his men.

Fragments of the various regiments engaged were now under cover of Fort Teneria and some buildings on its front and right. The field batteries of Captains Bragg and Ridgely were also partially covered by the fort. An incessant fire was kept up on this position by the guns of El Diablo, and other works on its right, and from the citadel. Here also General Twiggs, though quite unwell, joined the commander-in-chief, and was instrumental in causing the artillery captured from the enemy to be placed in battery and served by Captain Ridgely against El Diablo, until the arrival of Captain Webster's howitzer battery which took its place.

Meanwhile a mixed command, collected from the 1st, 3d, and 4th regiments and Baltimore battalion, were ordered to enter the town, penetrate to the right, and carry if possible the second fort. This party, under Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, advanced beyond a bridge called Purisima, when, finding it impracticable to gain the rear of the fort, they withdrew by order of the commanding general. During the absence of this column, a cavalry force appeared near the citadel, to oppose which, Captain Bragg, with a section of his artillery, was advanced. The lancers had previously charged upon the Ohio and a part of the Mississippi regiments, near some fields at a distance from the edge of the town, and had been repulsed with considerable loss. During the afternoon a cavalry party on the opposite side of the river was also dispersed by Captain Ridgely's battery.

At the approach of evening all the troops that had been engaged in the city were ordered back to camp, except Captain Ridgely's battery, and the regular infantry of the 1st division, which were detailed under Lieutenant-Colonel Garland, as a guard during the night for the captured works. A battalion of the 1st Kentucky regiment reinforced this command. Intrenching tools were procured, and additional strength was given to the works, and protection to the men, by working parties during the night.

THUS the main object proposed by General Taylor in the morning had been effected. A powerful diversion had favoured the operations of the 2d division, one of the enemy's advance works had been carried, and a strong foothold secured in the town. But this had been attained by the loss in killed and wounded of three hundred and ninety-four, including some of the most gallant and promising officers of the army. "It was a horrible sight," says an eye-witness, "to one not accustomed to blood and carnage. The dead lay in almost every possible position; some of the wounded were screaming in agony as they were hauled off in wagons; others lay on the ground begging for water and assistance; some hobbled along assisted by comrades; and a few, as we passed, turned a mute but imploring glance as if they desired help, and knew it would not be given. At the moment it seemed to me, feeling was dead—the regiment was marching rapidly to the fort, the enemy was blazing at it with their cannon, and in a few minutes all expected to be in the midst of a new conflict. Men's nerves were strung to a high pitch, and no one knew but in an hour he might be laid out also.

"About six o'clock, P. M. a chilly rain commenced, which in a little while increased to a terrific storm. During a part of the night, the encampment was almost covered with water; no tents had been prepared for the wounded, who were crowded in with their comrades; surgical operations were in progress all night, and many a heroic soldier, who had that day been cool and collected amid the uproar of battle, then felt as his ear was pierced with the groans of his comrades, that the scenes of the battle-field are not the whole of war."

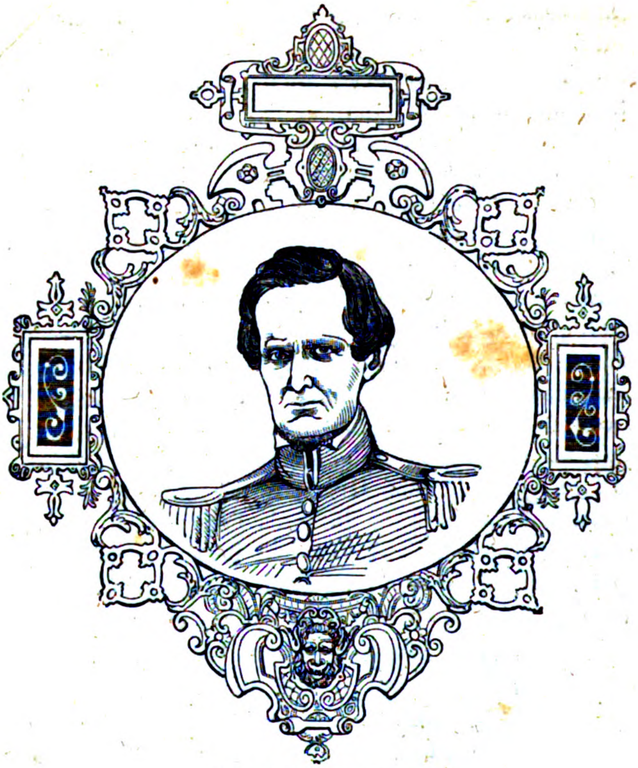
On the 22d no active operations took place in the lower part of the city. The sad duty of burying the dead and administering to the wounded occupied the principal part of the morning. The enemy's works kept up a spirited fire at the garrison of Fort Teneria, and at parties within their range, and were answered by Captain Ridgely's battery and the guns of the fort. While this was going on, a scout reported a body of Mexican lancers in the plain, and General Henderson, with the 2d regiment of Texan rangers, was sent in pursuit. He was unable to find the enemy. The garrison of the fort were relieved at noon by General Quitman's brigade of volunteers—Ridgely's battery alone remaining. At intervals during the afternoon, and until after nine o'clock at night, the enemy kept up from their fortifications and from the citadel, discharges of shells, grape, and round shot.

IN the forenoon, the commander and his troops were gratified by the sight of Worth's operations against the Bishop's Palace. At that distance, the long lines of troops gaily dressed, the arms of the different squadrons, glittering in the morning sun, the rapid evolutions, the volumes of smoke, and the final charges, altogether presented a grand and soul-stirring spectacle. At the appearance of the national flag on the Palace, a wild shout of joy burst from the exulting spectators, and was answered in sullen defiance by the roar of the enemy's batteries. During the day, General Quitman planned several attempts upon the adjacent works; but in evening his attention was attracted by a line of about fifteen hundred Mexican infantry, at some distance in the rear of their works. The presence of this force amounting to nearly three times the general's numbers, and posted for the evident purpose of protecting the works, induced him to abandon the hope of forcing the works without reinforcements. During the night several reconnoissances were made in the direction of El Diablo; while within the city, rockets and other signals kept up a communication between the enemy's different stations.

Hitherto we have traced the operations of the two sections of the army, acting independently. The duties of each being entirely distinct, and acting at stations naturally separate, it has been easy to avoid confusion in the description. On the 21st General Taylor's troops carried Fort Teneria, and penetrated into the city. On the same day, but rather later in the morning, Worth's division stormed the two forts on Federation Hill. On the following morning [22d] Worth stormed and took the Bishop's Palace, thus completing the operations for which his division had been detached, at the same time opening an undisputed road to the western part of the city. On the same day, no advance was made by Taylor's troops in the siege.

THE third day's operations were entirely different. Each general directed his efforts to the same object, the focus of attack being the city itself. Each, it is true, acted as before, independently of the other; Worth entering on the west side, and penetrating thence to the centre, and General Taylor approaching him from the east, yet it was but a combined attack upon the same point. This fact makes the operations of that day appear complexed and fragmentary, and is likely to lead to confusion in the description. To avoid this as much as possible, the movements of each general will be detailed by themselves, the reader bearing in mind that they were conducted simultaneously.

Early on the 23d, General Quitman discovered that the enemy had abandoned, during the night, El Diablo and the works adjacent. The loss of the Bishop's Palace had, no doubt, led to this step, by pointing out the necessity of concentrating their forces within the interior strong holds. The general communicated this fact to the commander-in-chief, and despatched Colonel Davis, with a portion of



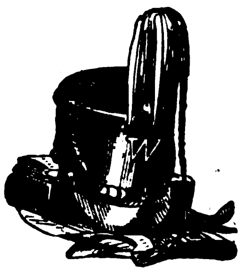
Colonel Jefferson Davis.

his command, assisted by Lieutenant-Colonel Anderson, to take possession of the deserted works. This was accordingly done. The enemy had withdrawn their artillery, so that nothing of value was captured except some ammunition and a few prisoners.

From this work, which commanded a view of the cathedral and part of the grand plaza, another redoubt, triangular or half mooned, was observed, connected with heavy stone buildings and walls adjoining the block of the city. General Quitman was ordered to advance towards these defences, and, if practicable, to occupy them. As this permission was not absolute, the general determined to act cautiously, sending out a party of riflemen, under Lieutenant Graves, to reconnoiter, supported at some distance by a company of Tennessee infantry, under Captain McMurray. It was soon reinforced by four companies of the Mississippi and Tennessee regiments, under Colonel Davis. As the colonel advanced, armed men were seen flying at his approach. Upon reaching the triangular redoubt, he found it open and exposed to the fire of the enemy from the stone buildings and walls in the rear; and, on reporting the same to General Quitman, he received orders to post his command as he might deem necessary, and await further instructions.

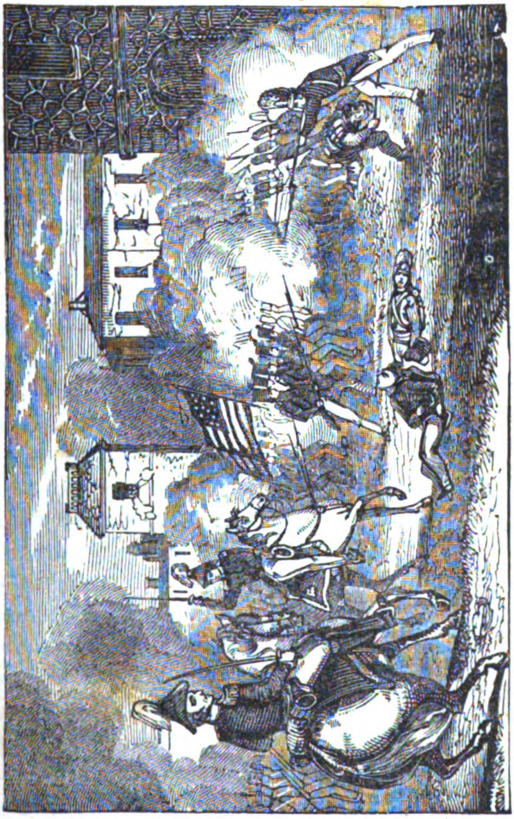
In reconnoitering the place, Colonel Davis received several shots from the enemy, which he answered by files of riflemen who had advanced to the slope of a breastwork erected across the street. The enemy increased their fire, and soon all the forts within reach were in full blast; while, on the other hand, the Americans, being reinforced, poured forth deadly volleys of rifle shot and musketry, which did terrible execution amid the enemy's ranks. In order to dislodge the skirmishers from the house-tops, the Texans rushed from door to door, breaking through buildings, and through inside walls, and mounting to a level with the enemy, picking them off with the rifle. Meanwhile those in the streets rushed from square to square, amid sweeping showers of grape and musketry, cheered on by Generals Lamar and Henderson, and Colonel Davis. Buildings, streets, and courts, were occupied without much loss, until, after an engagement of five hours, the Americans found themselves within two squares of the grand plaza. At this point General Quitman became apprehensive that the troops might fall within range of Bragg's artillery, and ordered offensive operations to cease until the effect of the batteries, which had been planted in one of the principal streets, could be seen. Meanwhile the artillery, under Captains Bragg and Ridgely, had been doing good service, by demolishing some works in front, and playing constantly on the cathedral.

Had General Taylor known the success of General Worth, who had then approached from the west to within two squares of the plaza, he could, no doubt, by a concerted movement with his brother officer, have forced the city to terms that night. But each general was ignorant of his colleague's position; and, accordingly, General Taylor ordered his troops to withdraw to the evacuated works, intending to concert with General Worth a combined operation upon the town. Accordingly the troops fell back deliberately, and in good order, to their original positions; Quitman's brigade being relieved after nightfall by that of General Hamer. On returning to camp, the commander-in-chief met an officer with the intelligence that General Worth, induced by the firing in the lower part of the city, was about making an attack at the upper extremity, which had also been evacuated by the enemy to a considerable distance. A note from the general imparted the additional information, of his having advanced to within a short distance of the principal plaza, and that his mortar was there, doing good execution upon the enemy's position. Although regretting that he had not heard this before, General Taytor did not deem it expedient to countermand his orders, and retired to camp.



WE now turn to the operations of General Worth, which, it should be repeated, were, during the greater part of their continuance, simultaneous with those of the commander-in-chief. Before daylight of the 23d, General Worth ordered the 5th infantry to transport the captured nine-pounder from Fort Soldada to a hill overlooking the town. This was a task of such difficulty, as to consume the time until nine o'clock. The gun was soon in operation upon some lancers in the fields below, who were driven with loss, into the city. It was afterwards directed with some effect against the cathedral. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Meade and Captain McCulloch, with a small detachment, advanced to reconnoiter the city; and Major Brown, with a section of McCall's battery, a company of the artillery battalion, and two companies of rangers, were sent to guard the strong pass of the Saltillo road and the bridge across the stream.

About ten A.M. a heavy firing was heard from the eastern quarter of the city. Its magnitude and continuance, together with minor circumstances, convinced General Worth that the commanding officer was conducting a main attack, and that orders for his co-operation, which he felt certain had been sent, had either miscarried in coming a circuit of six miles, or, what was more probable, had been intercepted by the enemy's numerous cavalry parties. Accordingly he lost no time in ordering his troops to commence an operation, which, unless otherwise directed, he designed executing partly under cover of the night. Two columns of attack were organized, to move along the two principal streets, leading from his position towards the grand plaza. The right column consisted of four companies of the 7th infantry, and Captain Holmes, with a twelve-pound howitzer of McCall's battery, under Lieutenant Martin; the left column, of four companies of the 8th infantry, under Captain Screven, with two six-pounders of McCall's battery. Colonel Hays's rangers were with the right column, those of Lieutenant-Colonel Walker with the left. Major Vinton, with four companies of the artillery battalion, formed the reserve. The whole was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Childs. Worth's orders were to avoid the points swept by the enemy's artillery; to press on the first plaza (capella); to gain possession of the ends of the streets beyond it, then enter the buildings, and by means of picks and bars break through the longitudinal sections of the walls; work from house to house, and mounting the roofs, to



Storming of Monterey.

place themselves on the same, breast-high, with the enemy. The light artillery forming the reserve, was to follow at suitable intervals, covered by parties to guard the pieces.

Colonel Childs, with the left column, reached the Plaza Capella without opposition; but on entering one in advance, [Plaza de Carne,] he was fired upon by musketry from the house-tops. The other column had also advanced without much interruption until within four squares of the grand plaza, when it experienced so terrible a fire as to render farther advance impossible. Soon after General Worth arrived in the Plaza de Carne, and intrusted the command to Brevet Brigadier-General Smith. The terrible scene that ensued, is so ably described by Reid, that we cannot do better than to quote, with some little alteration of the language. "Every street was barricaded with heavy works of masonry, the walls being some three or four feet thick, with embrasures for one or more guns, which raked the streets; the walls of gardens and sides of houses were all loop-holed for musketry; the tops of the houses were covered with troops, who were sheltered behind parapets some four feet high, upon which were piled sand bags, for their better protection, and from which they showered down a hurricane of balls.

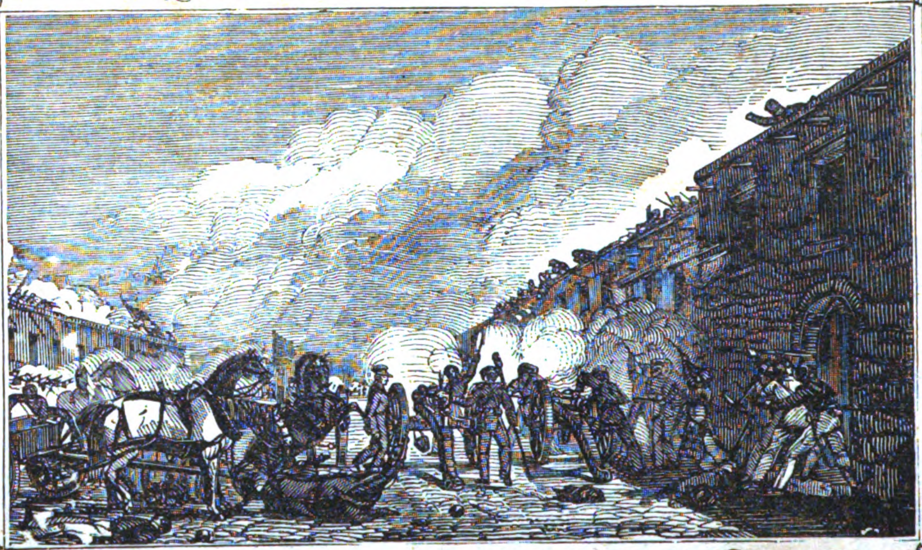
"Between three and four o'clock it became evident, from the cessation of the firing in the opposite direction, that the enemy had become disengaged, and were consequently enabled to draw off men and guns to our side, as their fire had now almost doubly increased. The street-fight became appalling—both columns were closely engaged with the enemy, and steadily advanced, inch by inch—our artillery was heard rumbling over the paved streets, galloping here and there, as the emergency required, and pouring forth a blazing fire of grape and ball—volley after volley of musketry, united with continued peals of artillery, which was almost deafening. The artillery of both sides raked the streets, the balls striking the houses with a terrible crash, while amid the roar of battle were heard the battering instruments used by the Texans. Doors were forced open, walls were battered down, entrances made through the longitudinal walls, and the enemy driven from room to room and from house to house, followed by the shrieks of women and the sharp crack of the Texan rifles. Cheer after cheer was heard in proud and exulting defiance, as the Texans or regulars gained the house-tops by means of ladders, while they poured in a rain of bullets upon the enemy on the opposite houses. * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"The column of Colonel Childs sustained a dreadful fire in the plaza, and while forcing its way up the streets. Amid this storm of destruction, the daring Captain Gatlin, of the 7th infantry, was severely wounded in the arm, while gallantly leading on his company. This column had now moved forward two squares, both sides of the plaza being occupied by our troops; while Walker's Texans were working their way towards the enemy through that line of buildings by means of pickaxes and their rifles. Captains Screven and Merrill had advanced so far as to gain a line of buildings to the east, and were driving the enemy before them. The two companies of the 5th were commanded by Lieutenants McPhail and Farrelly, who maintained their advanced position, keeping up a fire upon the enemy, occupying the houses in the vicinity, and in the next street beyond, which was used by the enemy as the principal thoroughfare to the citadel. * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"We had now gained possession of the city on the west side, to within one square of the cathedral plaza, where the Mexican forces were concentrated, having also carried a large building in the Plaza de Carne, which overlooked the principal defences in the city, on the roof of which were placed, during the night, two howitzers, for the purpose of raking the house-tops on the morrow."

A PARTICIPATOR in this terrible battle vividly describes the effect produced upon the inhabitants by the American artillery:

"The flag of the Spanish consul was pierced in a hundred places; the iron bow windows of the houses, which projected but a few inches into the streets, were torn and rent asunder by round shot. The city had been partially deserted by the inhabitants, still many women were seen in the doorways and streets, and even where the battle was raging, freely offering our men oranges and other fruits. They seemed impressed with the belief that we would conquer, and used this means to obtain our protection. Many ladies of the better class—the wives and daughters of civil functionaries, merchants, and officers of the army—remained in their houses, determined to abide the issue of the siege. In one room in particular, into which our men had picked an entrance through a wall of massive thickness, a large number of females was found. They were alarmed to a degree painful to behold, filled as their ears had been



Contests in the Streets at Monterey.

with stories of the brutality of the Americans of the north, so that it was with the greatest difficulty that we convinced them of their safety."

General Worth continued his operations until after dark, when he received a communication from General Smith, stating that the latter could hold all his positions during the night. This determined Worth to withdraw none of his troops, save a few Texans on the river side of the town. The night-scene of the 23d was grand and melancholy. The thick darkness was often interrupted by flaming bombs, and the silence by the roar of cannon. "Soldiers and officers," says the excellent authority we have several times quoted, "occupied the plaza and the tops of houses, keeping a strict guard upon the movements of the enemy. The Texans, under Hays, encamped at the base of the Bishop's Palace, and a strong picket guard was posted in the rear, while those under Walker kept their position near the post-office. At dark the mortar, which had been embedded in the cemetery, and masked by the church wall, opened its fire upon the grand plaza, under the direction of Major Munroe. The first bomb fell a little short; but the projecting charge being increased, produced exact results, which soon caused a return fire, with shells, from the enemy's howitzers. The night was cloudy, and the winds of a foreboding storm freshened on the sultry air; scattered clouds chased each other through the sky; below lay the city, wrapped in the drapery of darkness whose folds covered the dreadful scene of the carnage and ruin of its streets, where lay dead horses, demolished masonry, broken arms, and cast off accoutrements of soldiers. Batteries of artillery were drawn up in the plazas, in which, and on the tops of the surrounding houses, were sentineled our troops. Farther yet towards the cathedral, confusion and disorder marked the Mexicans' defeat; beautiful gardens and villas lay in ruins; their works of art were demolished, and their dead lay on the house-tops and in the streets, while the grand plaza swarmed with their concentrated forces, and a desolation and despair prevailed among their army. For a moment all was hushed in darkness; peace seemed to hover over the scene of ruin and strife, and waving her branch of olive, to command the contending parties to cease the wild war of bloodshed and devastation. It was but for a moment; for soon bombs and shells were crossing each other, as they rose in the heavens to the height of their curve, gleaming through the air like fiery comets, and then bursting with a loud report. The view at this time, from the Bishop's Palace, was magnificent. No further incident occurred during the night. The wounded were removed to Arista's hacienda, which was converted into a hospital, and every preparation was made to renew the attack on the coming morning with redoubled vigour."

T noon of this day, while the battle was raging with great fury, General Taylor received from General Morales, governor of the state of New Leon, the following communication:

"As you are resolved to occupy the place by force of arms, and the Mexican general-in-chief is resolved to defend it at every cost, as his honour and duty require him to do, thousands of victims, who, from indigence and want of means, find themselves now in the theatre of war, and who would be uselessly sacrificed, claim the right which, in all times and in all countries, humanity extends. As governor of the state, and a legitimate representative of the people, I state their case to you, and hope, from your civilization and refinement, that, whatever may be the event of the present contest, you will issue orders that families shall be respected, or will grant a reasonable time for them to leave the capital."

Through a mistake of the Mexicans, this note was first sent to General Worth, who transmitted it to the commander-in-chief. The latter replied as follows:

"The communication of your excellency, of this morning, I have just received, and in answer to your excellency, I have to inform you, that the rights of individuals who are not hostile, particularly women and children, will be respected as much as is possible in a state of warlike operations; but they cannot be permitted to leave the city. The advantages achieved by the American arms are too decisive to permit of any other terms than the capitulation of the city; and the sooner this is effected, the better for those interested."

Thus, after three days' fighting, the Americans had driven an enemy nearly double their number from all their out-positions, and surrounded them in such a manner, that they must either surrender, or evacuate the city. Yet the citadel and grand plaza were the strongest defences of the town; and no one of the assailants imagined but that a more terrible drama than any yet witnessed was to be played on the morrow.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAPITULATION OF MONTEREY.

BEFORE daylight on the 24th, the Texans recommenced operations against the western side of the plaza. Soon a large portion of Worth's division were in the streets; and long before the sun arose, the din of battle filled the streets, and stirred on the Americans to further and complete conquests. Suddenly bugles were heard from the enemy's quarters, sounding a parley; all offensive operations immediately ceased, and soon a white flag was seen approaching, together with several officers.

It was borne by Colonel Moreno, inspector-general of the Mexican army, who also carried a letter addressed to General Taylor.

The colonel proceeded to Fort Diablo, whence he was conducted by Lieutenant-Colonel Rogers to Fort Teneria, and introduced to General Hamer. By that officer he was furnished with an escort to Walnut Springs, where General Taylor then was. He delivered to the commander-in-chief the following note from General Ampudia, written at nine o'clock the previous evening.

"Having made the defence of which I believe this city susceptible, I have fulfilled my duty, and have satisfied that military honour which in a certain manner is common to all armies of the civilized world.

"To prosecute the defence, therefore, would only result in distress to the population, who have already suffered enough from the misfortune consequent on war; and taking it for granted, that the American government has manifested a disposition to negotiate, I propose to you, to evacuate the city and its fort, taking with me the *personel* and *materiel* which have remained, and under the assurance that no harm shall ensue to the inhabitants who have taken a part in the defence."

Immediately after reading this note, General Taylor is said to have expressed his determination not to comply with its request. His answer is annexed:

"In answer to your proposition to evacuate the city and fort with all the *personel* and *materiel* of war, I have to state that my duty compels me to decline acceding to it. A complete surrender of the town and garrison, the latter as prisoners of war, is now demanded. But such surrender will be upon terms and the gallant defence of the place creditable alike to the Mexican troops and nation, will prompt me to make those terms as liberable as possible. The garrison will be allowed at your option, after laying down its arms, to retire to the interior on condition of not serving again during the war or until regularly exchanged. I need hardly say that the rights of con-combatants will be respected.

"An answer to this communication is required by twelve o'clock. If you assent to an accommodation an officer will be despatched at once under instructions to arrange the conditions."

Such an answer was totally unexpected by Ampudia. Throughout the whole siege he had behaved in a manner strangely contrasting with his former boasting proclamations, and unworthy of the high trust granted him as commandant of a capital city. It is stated on good authority, that on receiving General Taylor's note, he evinced such unmanly timidity as authorized his officers to believe that he would surrender at discretion, and that it was alone through their earnest entreaties not to be so disgraced, that he consented still to negotiate. Accordingly, long before the expiration of the time appointed by the American general for receiving an answer, he desired a personal interview at a house named by himself. This was agreed to by General Taylor, and at the appointed time and place the two commanders met, [September 24th,] each attended by several officers. After the usual preliminaries, Ampudia announced, as official information, that commissioners from the United States had been received by the government of Mexico, and that a revolution had taken place in his country, since his assuming command of Monterey, which virtually nullified the orders to defend that place. A conversation followed, during which General Taylor became convinced that Ampudia's object was merely to gain time, and consequently he arose to end the conference. One of the Mexican officers then suggested the appointment of several commissioners from each army, with power to negotiate terms of capitulation. Ampudia assented. Generals Worth and Henderson, and Colonel Jefferson Davis were named on the part of the Americans, and General J. La Ortega, General P. Requena and Senor M. La Llano, governor of the province, on that of the Mexicans.

To these six individuals the negotiations for the fate of Monterey were intrusted. They possessed, in an eminent degree, the confidence of their respective commanders; and both parties were gratified at the prospect of a speedy termination of active hostilities. General Taylor gave verbal instructions to his commissioners, on which they afterwards based the following articles.

I. As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present condition of the contending armies, we demand the surrender of the town, the arms and munitions of war, and all other public property within the place.

II. That the Mexican armed force retire beyond the Rinconada, Linares, and San Fernando on the coast.

III. The commanding general of the army of the United States agrees that the Mexican officers reserve their side arms and private baggage; and the troops be allowed to retire under their officers without parole, a reasonable time being allowed to withdraw their forces.

IV. The immediate delivery of the main work now occupied to the army of the United States.

V. To avoid collisions, and for mutual convenience, the troops of the United States shall not occupy the town until the Mexican forces have been withdrawn, except for hospital purposes, &c.

VI. The commanding general of the United States agrees not to advance beyond the line specified in the second section before the expiration of eight weeks, or until the respective governments can be heard from.

The Mexican commissioners refused to yield the city on these terms, and presented a counter proposition, in which, among other material items, they demanded permission for their soldiers to retire into the interior with their arms. This was urged not only as a matter of soldierly pride, but of the ordinary courtesy extended by one gallant army towards another. As the American commissioners had no power to accede to such terms, the meeting rose to report disagreement.

ON hearing this result, and its cause, General Ampudia entered into a long address to prove that, although it was his anxious desire to avoid further bloodshed, yet the point of disagreement between the negotiators so far involved the honour of his country, that he could not yield. General Taylor having expressed his wish that no more blood might be shed, the commission met a second time, the Americans being authorized to concede the small arms.

The difficulty, however, was not yet settled. The Mexicans evinced that one concession had merely whetted their appetite for more, and they now demanded that the artillery might be withdrawn, since it would appear discreditable for that arm to remain, after all others had been withdrawn. The commission again rose. On ascertaining the point of disagreement, that more was demanded than the middle ground upon which the negotiation had, out of courtesy, been placed, General Taylor arose, with a determination to close the conference. While crossing the room he was addressed by a Mexican officer, and some conversation ensued. At this time General Worth requested permission to address some remarks to General Ampudia, the spirit of which was—that which he had manifested throughout the negotiation—generosity and leniency, with a desire to prevent further bloodshed. After considerable conversation, the commission assembled once more, and, after much delay, agreed on the following terms:

Art. I. As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present position of the contending armies, it is agreed that the city, the fortifications, cannon, the munitions of war, and all other public property, with the undermentioned exceptions, be surrendered to the commanding general of the United States forces, now at Monterey.

ART. II. That the Mexican forces be allowed to retain the following arms, to wit: the commissioned officers their side-arms; the infantry their arms and accoutrements; the cavalry their arms and accoutrements; the artillery one field battery, not to exceed six pieces, with twenty-one rounds of ammunition.

ART. III. That the Mexican armed forces retire, within seven days from this date, beyond the line formed by the pass of Rinconada, the city of Linares, and San Fernando de Presas.

ART. IV. That the citadel of Monterey be evacuated by the Mexican, and occupied by the American forces, to-morrow morning, at ten o'clock.

ART V. To avoid collision, and for mutual convenience, that the troops of the United States will not occupy the city until the Mexican forces have withdrawn, except for hospital and storage purposes.

ART. VI. That the forces of the United States will not advance beyond the line specified in the 2d [3d] article before the expiration of eight weeks, or until the orders or instructions of the respective governments can be received.

ART. VII. That the public property to be delivered shall be turned over, and received by officers appointed by the commanding generals of the two armies.

ART. VIII. That all doubts as to the meaning of any of the preceding articles shall be solved by an equitable construction, and on principles of liberality to the retiring army.

ART. IX. That the Mexican flag, when struck at the citadel, may be saluted by its own battery

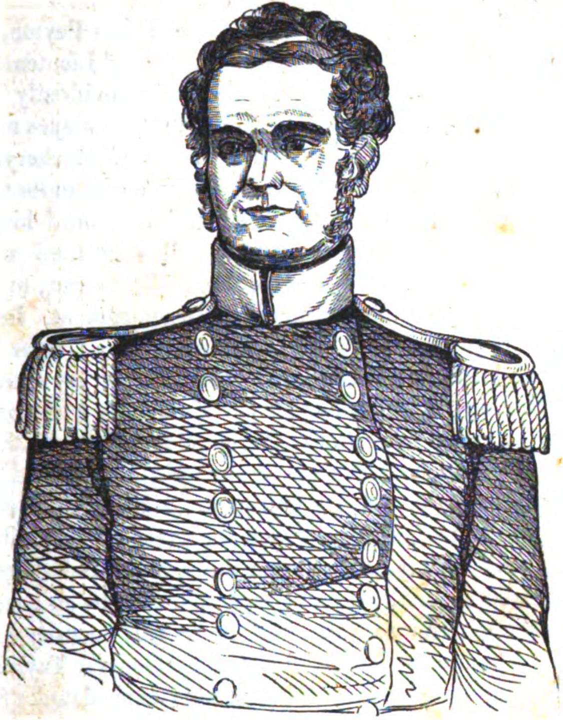
AFTER a short recess, the American commissioners again repaired to the room in which they had parted from the Mexicans. The latter were tardy in joining them, as well as in completing the instruments of capitulation. The first six articles only had been agreed to, and the remaining three were added during this session. At a late hour the English original was handed to General Taylor, for his examination, and the Spanish original to Ampudia. Taylor signed the instrument, and delivered it to Colonel Davis, who returned to receive the Spanish copy, with the signature of General

Ampudia, and to deliver the one having General Taylor's signature, so that each general might countersign the original to be retained by the other. Instead of signing the instrument, Ampudia came in person to meet the commissioners. To the astonishment of all, he began to dispute on many points which had been considered as settled, and evinced a disposition to make the Spanish instrument vary essentially from the English. After a tedious parley, the Mexican chief was requested to sign the copy prepared for his own commissioners, the English original being at the same time left with him, so that, according to promise, he might have it translated during the night, and be ready in the morning with a Spanish duplicate of the English copy left with him. The two would thus be made to correspond, and he would be compelled to admit his knowledge of the English original before he signed.

The commission met on the following morning, when Ampudia renewed his efforts to gain something more than what was conceded by the original agreement. At his request the Americans had previously adopted the word "capitulation," instead of "surrender," and he now wished to substitute "stipulation" for capitulation. It had now become evident that he did not wish to sign at all, but was merely quibbling about names and terms. It became necessary peremptorily to demand his immediate signing of the English instrument. The Spanish instrument first signed by Ampudia was destroyed in the presence of his commissioners, and the translation of the American instrument was countersigned by General Taylor and delivered.

Thus the tedious and intricate operations before Monterey were brought to a close, and nothing further remained but for the Mexicans to resign the command to their victorious opponents. On the part of General Taylor the terms of capitulation were strictly observed, no soldier being permitted to enter the city, unless wounded, until the enemy had begun to leave it.

The ceremony of evacuation commenced on the 25th. General Worth was intrusted with the superintendence of it. The citadel surrendered first. On each side of the road leading to it, the American army was drawn up in line, accompanied by the commander-in-chief and other distinguished officers. Worth appointed a force, under brevet Brigadier-General Smith, to take possession of the fortification. As the time approached, the heavy roar of cannon mingled with the sounds of the Mexican bugle, and the swelling music from the military bands announced the commencement of the surrender. The tri-coloured flag was slowly lowered, and soon unfolding proudly in its stead, amid the shouts of the victorious army, the



General Worth.

star-spangled banner was flung over the battlements. Sadly and silently the garrison moved from its gates, with their humiliated gaze bent towards the earth, and sustained apparently only by the wild uproar around. It was a thrilling scene; and, as the veterans of Taylor's army filed towards the entrance, shout after shout rung, with the roar of artillery, and the enthusiasm of the Americans became almost uncontrollable. Strains of martial music exhilarated every spirit, and soon the immense pile, which had so often enabled a handful of men to resist an army, during the civil dissensions of Mexico, was in undisputed possession of the American troops.

The city was evacuated by degrees. The first division of Ampudia's army marched out on the 26th; the second division, commanded by Ampudia in person, on the following day; and the remainder left on the 28th. The cavalry rode away in small detachments. They were accompanied by men, women, and children, of every grade, colour, and condition, on foot and riding, some carrying immense burdens, and others supported by their friends. A sadness was spread over the countenances of that motley assembly, and over a few was the dark, determined expression which betokens mischief. Riding beside General Ampudia was Colonel Bailie Peyton, followed by Major Scott, of the 5th [American] infantry, and Lieutenants Deas, Hanson, Robinson, and McLaws. The chief evidently appeared uneasy, and he was observed frequently to throw his eyes round with a hurried, restless expression, as though fearful of treachery.

When the enemy had retired, the American commander appointed General Worth commander of the city, and quartered his division within its walls. The remaining troops still encamped at Walnut Springs. The strength and number of the defences was, to both soldier and officer, a source of admiration and astonishment. In a former part of the narrative a description of the principal of these has been given; but no description can convey any but a very faint idea of the fortifications of this famous city. From the east end, where General Taylor began his attack, to the main plaza in the centre, fort was piled on fort, to a degree of strength that seemed to laugh at any effort of artillery. Every house was a defence; every roof a barricade; the east half of the city was one great military pile. Communications were established between the rows of buildings, so that thousands of troops could pass and repass, unseen by an enemy, from the plaza to the extremity of the city, in perfect security. It must ever remain a matter of astonishment, that General Taylor's command, after entering the city, was not utterly annihilated. Monterey was won at a sacrifice proportionate to its importance. The whole number of killed, wounded, and missing, was five hundred and sixty-one, of whom one hundred and fifty-eight were killed, three hundred and ninety-two wounded, and eleven missing. The total force of the assailants did not exceed seven thousand men. Neither the number of the enemy, nor their loss, has ever been correctly ascertained. At the commencement they probably exceeded ten thousand. Ampudia reported to the secretary of war a loss of five officers and one hundred and seventeen privates killed; twenty-three officers, two hundred and twenty-one men wounded; one officer and eight men "injured," and sixty-three wounded; making in all four hundred and thirty-eight. But this is doubtless much below the actual number.

Having already described each movement of the American army, during the three days' battle, little need be said of its achievements by way of comment. All the causes which have been given as explanation to the remarkable fact that seven thousand men stormed the defences of Monterey, although garrisoned by a much superior number, must be narrowed down to one, the military superiority of the American soldier. Had the skill and bravery of the Mexican been equal to those of his antagonist, it requires a mere effort of common sense to determine that, by fair battle, the city could never have been carried No weakness, then, of the commanding general, no combination of unexpected events, fortuitous to the assailants, no effect of the loss of Federation and Independence Hills, can be pleaded as an adequate excuse for Mexican inefficieney, or in derogation of American superiority. Every fairly fought battle ever won, was won in consequence of military superiority; it is the consciousness of this superiority that forms a sense of glory; and the greater the degree in which it exists, the more the glory. Judging, then, by this rule, we arrive at the conclusion that the storming of Monterey was one of the most glorious achievements of modern warfare. General Ampudia announced the fall of Monterey in a letter contrasting singularly with his pompous threatenings prior to the siege. In any civilized country he would have been court-martialed and shot for his most shameful and cowardly conduct during the whole assault; but we find him, in the most cool and impudent manner, appropriating credit to himself, and excusing the capitulation by falsehoods which stand in direct contrast with his previous assertions.

"On the morning of the 22d," he says, "General Taylor directed his columns of attack against the Bishop's Hill, an elevation commanding the city, and although in their first advance they were repulsed in a skirmish, a full brigade of regular troops returned to the charge. Unfortunately, two pieces of cannon and a mortar, which defended the position, got out of order, and became useless; and although, as soon as advised of it, I sent a reinforcement of infantry, with two pieces of light artillery, to their aid, it reached the hill too late; the enemy had already succeeded in obtaining possession of the castle. This accident compelled me to concentrate my force in the plaza, in order to present to the foe a more vigorous defence, and to repel on the 23d, as was done, the assaults made by them through the streets and houses of the city. But as, under these circumstances, I suffered great scarcity of ammunition and provisions, and in spite of the ardour with which the entire army, both regulars and auxiliaries, were animated, I proposed to the American general a parley, which resulted in an understanding by which the honour of the nation and the army, the *personnel* of the division under my command, its arms and equipments, were preserved.

"This is a true statement of the operations of the campaign up to the 24th instant; and if an inadequate supply of means, and other circumstances, have led to this result, we have yet no cause for a moment's dismay, for the republic will now put forward all her elements of greatness, and, with one single victory, which we may, shall, and must obtain, will solve the problem definitely in favour of our arms."

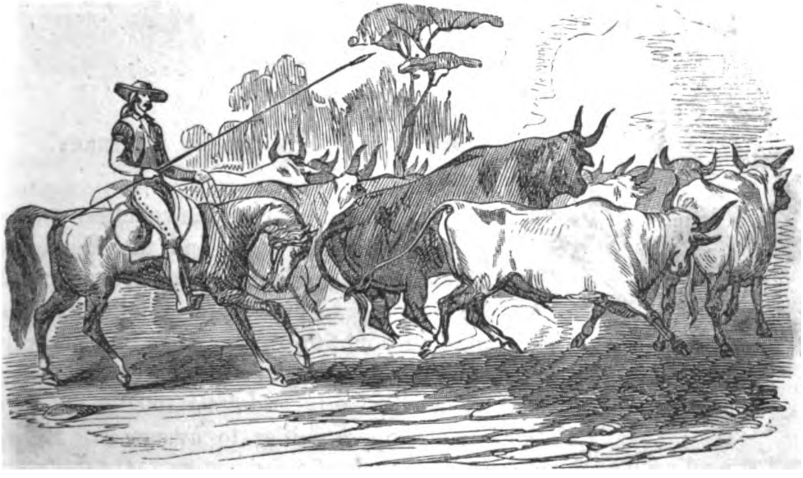
The "great scarcity of ammunition," of which Ampudia complains, was such that, in the language of an eye witness, *cords* of it were found in the citadel alone; and a careful writer says that the cathedral was piled as high as the surrounding houses with ammunition and military stores. Sixty thousand musket cartridges were taken from the citadel, and forty-two pieces of artillery from the city. The stores of Monterey would have supplied ten thousand men in active daily operations for more than a month.

GENERAL MARIANO DE SALAS, on receiving information of the fall of Monterey, issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of Mexico, announcing the fact, and exhorting all classes to unite in repelling the invaders. The language of this document is worthy of preservation. It was then regarded as the vain ebullition of the weak governor of a weak nation; but subsequent operations have shown that it was an actual transcript of Mexican character. By their perseverance under the most overwhelming defeats, the people of that country have echoed to this voice of their ruler, and shown that all that was necessary to success was power. Salas concludes with the following stirring appeal:

"Partial disasters are of no importance; the Spanish nation suffered much more in the space of six years, and the results of her heroic efforts, and the co-operation of all her sons, was that the bones of half a million of unjust invaders whiten the fields of the peninsula. Shall we become unworthy of independence by not showing ourselves sons worthy of our fathers? That independence was achieved by us alone only after ten years of constancy; and it is not possible that an organized nation should lose less strength than its oppressed sons, such as our first leaders were.

"Mexicans! The time to act has come. Will you suffer your population to be decimated, sending it to perish by handfuls on the frontier, and to perish less by the enemy's balls than by neglect? The government will exert all its power in the defence of your rights, but it has a right to expect that indifference or inactive contemplation shall not be the recompense of its plan of operations; for the nation would prefer that not one stone should be left upon another, rather than to hold its sovereignty, its rights, and its temples trampled under foot. The invincible general called by it to place himself at the head of the troops, is resolved not to survive the dishonours of his country."

General Taylor established his head-quarters at Monterey, and took efficient measures to afford his troops some repose after their toilsome campaign. The city is admirably situated for health and recreation. The valley is not only most beautiful in point of scenery, but is rich in corn, sugar, oranges, grapes, figs, and other tropical productions. The population of the city, according to Mr. Poinsett, is fifteen thousand souls. "The valleys are fruitful and provisions abundant for the existing population. There is no want of cattle, sheep, and goats, in this part of Mexico, and the country between Monterey and Zacatecas abounds in flocks and herds. The latter is a mining district, and the capital, situated at the foot of an abrupt and porphyritic mountain, boasts of a noble cathedral, a magnificent town hall, and the best mint in Mexico. The mines are all worked by English companies."

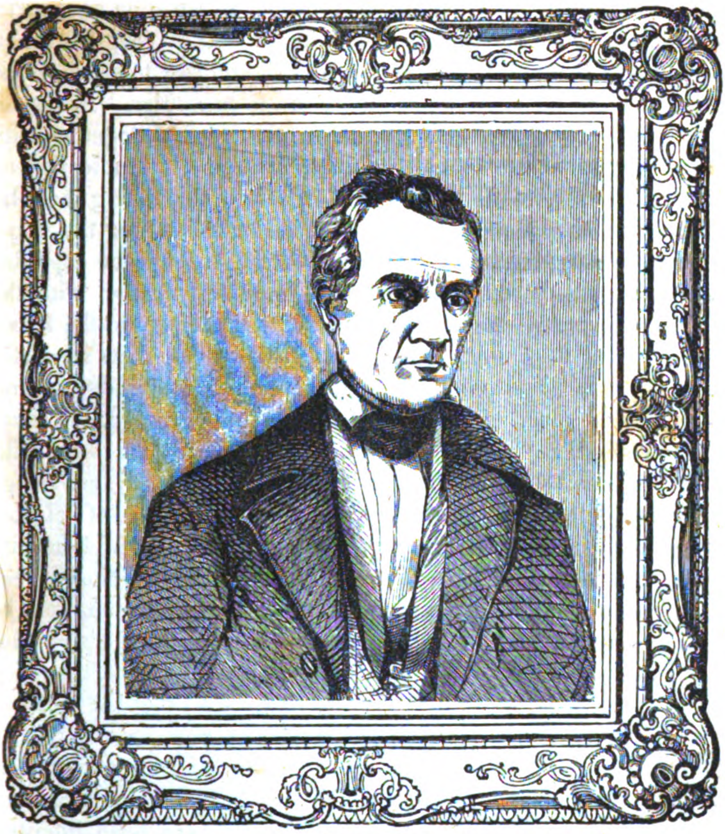


Herdsman of Monterey.

CHAPTER XIX.

OPERATIONS CONSEQUENT ON THE CAPTURE OF MONTEREY.

SOME difficulties between the volunteer troops of the American army and the Mexicans, which occurred soon after the occupation of the city, are worthy of notice. Both parties were no doubt to blame. The citizens were exasperated at what they considered a wholesale robbery of their property, and determined to embrace all convenient opportunities to avenge it. Hence straggling Americans were in danger of assassination. On the other hand, the volunteers, unused to the strictness of camp discipline, and elated with signal success, were disposed to look unfavourably on those whom they had conquered, and to resent, fearlessly, any thing bearing the semblance of an insult. Such feelings led to frequent

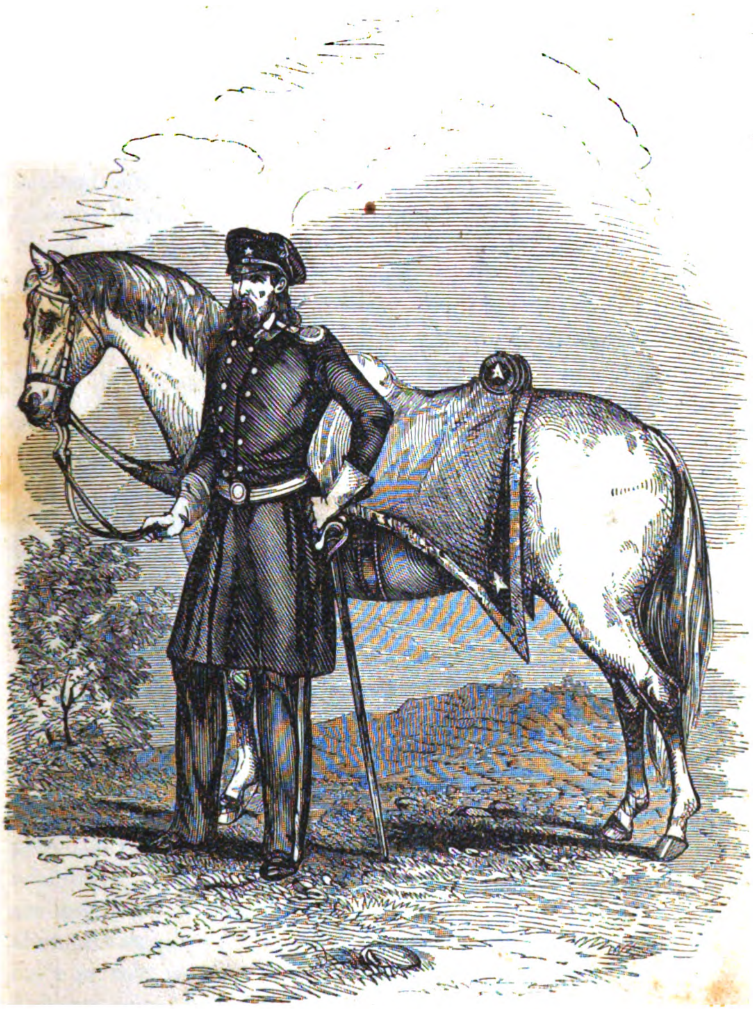


President Polk.

hostile collisions, and finally to murder; so that as early as the 29th of September, Governor Morales wrote to General Taylor, informing him that many complaints were daily made against the excesses committed upon the persons and property of the Mexicans by American volunteers, and specifying three cases of murder just then committed. The American commander made prompt inquiry, and ascertained the statement to be correct. He accordingly wrote back to the governor, acknowledging the fact, and signifying his determination to use every exertion to arrest the evil, at the same time reminding the governor of the impossibility of maintaining rigid discipline in that branch of the service. In a few days, however, nearly all the volunteers were removed from the city; and this circumstance, united with the exertions of Generals Taylor and Worth, soon arrested the evil.

The terms of capitulation met with opposition from a quarter whence it was least expected. Government received information of the victory with marked displeasure. Even in the hall of congress disapprobation was expressed, and President Polk refused to sanction the clause providing for eight weeks cessation of hostilities. Notice of this was soon communicated officially to the general, together with orders to resume active operations immediately. In vindication of his course he wrote to the government an able letter, stating the relative force and condition of himself and the enemy during the siege, and the circumstances which had induced him to sign the capitulation. "Although," he says, "the main communication with the interior was in our possession, yet one route was open to the Mexicans throughout the operations, and could not be closed, as were also other minor tracks and passes through the mountains. Had we therefore insisted on more rigorous terms than those granted, the result would have been the escape of the body of the Mexican force with the destruction of its artillery and magazines, our only advantage being the capture of a few prisoners of war at the expense of valuable lives and much damage to the city. The consideration of humanity was present to my mind during the conference which led to the convention, and outweighed, in my judgment, the doubtful advantages to be gained by a resumption of the attack upon the town. This conclusion has been fully confirmed by an inspection of the enemy's position and means since the surrender. It was discovered that his principal magazine, containing an immense amount of powder, was in the cathedral, completely exposed to our shells from two directions. The explosion of this mass of powder, which must have ultimately resulted from a continuance of the bombardment, would have been infinitely disastrous involving the destruction not only of Mexican troops but of non-combatants, and even our own people had we pressed the attack.

"In regard to the temporary cessation of hostilities, the fact that we are not at this moment, within eleven days of the termination of the period fixed by the convention, prepared to move forward in force, is a sufficient explanation of the military reasons which dictated this suspension of arms. It paralyzed the enemy during a period when from the want of necessary means we could not possibly move. I desire distinctly to state and to call the attention of the authorities to the fact, that with all diligence in breaking mules and setting up wagons, the first wagons in addition to our original train from Corpus Christi, (and but one hundred and twenty-five in number,) reached my head-quarters on the same day with the secretary's communication of October 13th,—viz. the 2d instant, [November.] At the date of the surrender of Monterey, our force had not more than ten days' rations, and even now, with all our endeavours, we have not more



Colonel May.

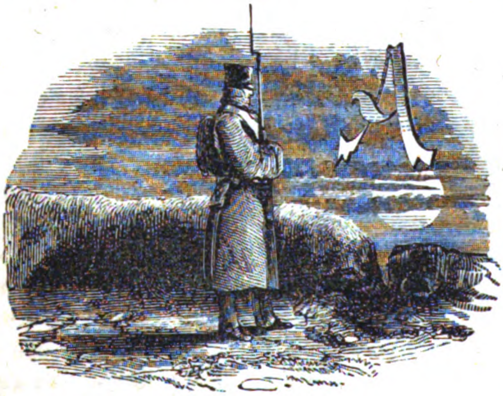
than twenty-five. The task of fighting and beating the enemy is among the least difficulties that we encounter—the great question of supplies necessarily controls all the operations in a country like this. At the date of the convention, I could not of course have foreseen that the department would direct an important detachment from my command without consulting me, or without waiting the result of the main operation under my orders."

Such were the principal reasons which induced General Taylor to accept the terms of capitulation. Others were given by him in subsequent letters; and his course was ably defended by General Worth, Colonel Davis, and other distinguished officers. It met with the decided approval of military men throughout the Union, as well as the approbation of the people in general.

HITHERTO General Taylor had, by authority from government, purchased most of his supplies of the Mexicans, paying for them in cash at their full value. The authorities at home now began to fear that this course was directly opposed to the long cherished object of conquering a peace, inasmuch as the enemy might take advantage of it to dispose of those productions, which their own people would not purchase, and so accumulate means to continue a war, which was little burden to themselves. Accordingly, in a letter written September 22d, the secretary of war intimated these apprehensions to the general, recommending to him in future the policy of forced supplies. By this means, as the secretary thought, the people would be compelled to realize the evil of war, and thus a peace would speedily be conquered. "This mode," he affirms, "is the ordinary one, and you are instructed to adopt it, if in that way you are satisfied you can get abundant supplies for your forces; but should you apprehend a difficulty in this respect, then you will adopt the policy of paying the ordinary price, without allowing to the owners the advantages of the enhancement of the price resulting from the increased demand. Should you apprehend a deficiency under this last mode of dealing with the inhabitants, you will be obliged to submit to their exactions, provided by this mode you can supply your wants on better terms than by drawing what you may need from the United States. Should you attempt to supply your troops by contributions, or the appropriation of private property, you will be careful to exempt the property of all foreigners from any and all exactions whatsoever. The president hopes you will be able to derive from the enemy's country, without expense to the United States, the supplies you may need or a considerable part of them; but should you fail in this, you will procure them in the most economical manner."

In the same letter, Secretary Marcy unfolds part of the plan adopted by the department for prosecuting the war. Tamaulipas was to be taken at as early a day as possible, and the general's opinion asked as to the practicability of advancing towards the Mexican capital by the route he was then pursuing. The force for the invasion of Tamaulipas was to be placed under the immediate command of Major-General Patterson, accompanied by Brigadier-Generals Pillow and Shields. A movement by way of Tampico was also hinted, to favour which, the general was exhorted to push forward with all convenient despatch to San Luis Potosi.

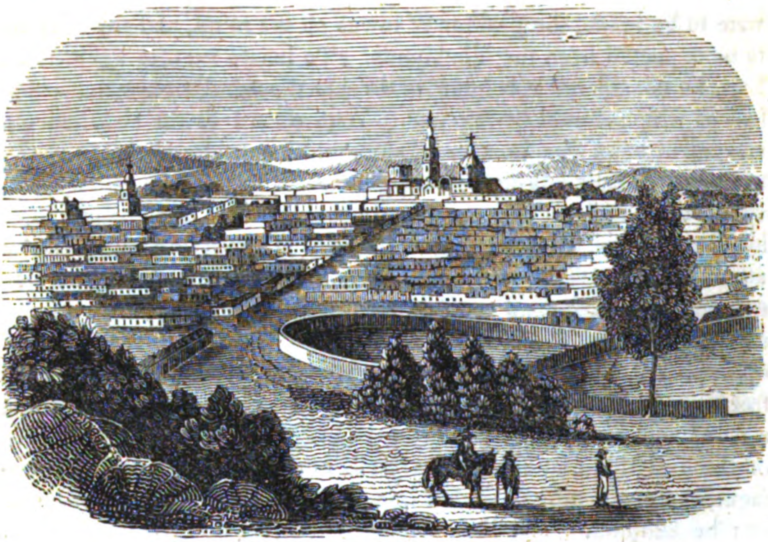
General Taylor found it impossible to furnish the army with provisions by forced supplies from the inhabitants, and the project was consequently abandoned.



AN attack upon Vera Cruz was hinted to General Taylor as early as October 13th. "It is under consideration," says Secretary Marcy, in a letter of that date, "by the government, though not yet fully determined, to land a considerable force in the vicinity of Vera Cruz, and invest that city. Should this be undertaken, a larger force of regular troops will be required than that assigned to the Tamaulipas expedition. It is desired to know, if, in your opinion, a detachment of two thousand of this description of force can be spared for that purpose from those under your command, without essentially interfering with your plans and operations. It is not desired, nor intended to weaken the force with you at Monterey, or to embarrass you by diverting troops from the Rio Grande, which you may deem necessary as reinforcements to the execution of your own contemplated operations."

In reply to this letter, General Taylor detailed with accuracy the nature of the country through which the contemplated movements were to be made, the position of towns on the route, and the supplies to be expected from the inhabitants. To insure success against San Luis, he considered a column of twenty thousand troops necessary, half of which should be regulars. With regard to the simultaneous movement upon San Luis and Tampico, he considered that, on military principles, twenty-five or thirty thousand men would be required, with a train and military supplies in proportion. One paragraph of his letter, on a most important subject, is deserving of particular attention, as the views of the one best qualified to decide, and formed evidently from long and careful experience. "It may be expected," says the general, "that I should give my views as to the policy of occupying a defensive line, to which I have above alluded. I am free to confess, that in view of the difficulties and expenses attending a movement into the heart of the country, and particularly in view of the unsettled and revolutionary character of the Mexican government, the occupation of such a line seems to me the best course that can be adopted. The line taken might either be that on which we propose to insist as the boundary between the republics—say the Rio Grande—or the line to which we have advanced, viz.: the Sierra Madre, including Chihuahua and Santa Fe. The former line could be held with a much smaller force than the latter; but even the line of the Sierra Madre could be held with a force greatly less than would be required for an active campaign. Monterey controls the great outlet from the interior; a strong garrison at this point, with an advance at Saltillo, and small corps at Monclova, Linares, Victoria, and Tampico, would effectually cover the line."

Agreeably to instructions from government, General Taylor notified General Santa Anna, the Mexican commander-in-chief, that the armistice would terminate on the 13th of November. On the 12th of that month, General Worth, with two regiments of infantry, a company of volunteers, eight companies of artillery, and a field-battery, moved from Monterey to Saltillo, which Taylor determined to make the limit of his offensive operations—at least for the present. On the following day, the commander followed in person, accompanied by two squadrons of dragoons. When he reached the state of Coahuila, of which Saltillo is the capital, he received a message from the governor, Marie de Aguirre, remonstrating against the march of the Americans, and intimating that although no troops were at hand to support him, yet he protested "in the name of the state of Coahuila against the government of the United States of the north, for the usurpation of the territory occupied by their arms—for the outrages and damages which may accrue to the persons and property of the inhabitants of these defenceless towns—for the injuries the pub-

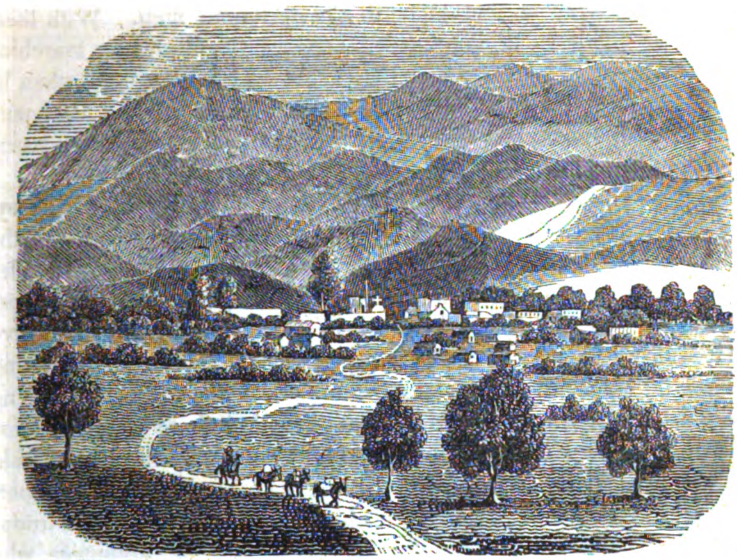


Saltillo.

lic interests may suffer, and for all the evils consequent upon the most unjustifiable invasion ever known to the world." Without answering this paper, General Taylor pushed forward to Saltillo, where General Worth had been since the 16th.

Saltillo is situated about sixty-five miles south-west from Monterey, and contains nearly twenty thousand inhabitants. Many of the houses are two stories high, well built of sun-burnt bricks, covered with cement. The streets are well paved, and the whole city is about the size of Monterey, but more compactly built. Its four plazas are kept in neat order, and its numerous fountains, scattered here and there, impart to it an appearance of taste and elegance. The cathedral is a magnificent building, larger than that at Monterey, built of the same material as the houses, having the cement mixed with small stones.

The first care of General Taylor was to make a reconnoissance of the interior. Two principal routes led in this direction—one to San Luis Potosi, the other through a luxuriantly fertile country, to Parras. The first of these was covered by Worth's troops; and General Taylor now ordered Brigadier-General Wool, who had lately arrived in the vicinity with the division of the centre, to move upon Parras. The state of Coahuila was thus completely covered, so that should occasion offer, a demonstration might immediately be made against Zacatecas, Durango, or San Luis. General Taylor and his staff returned to Monterey on the 23d.



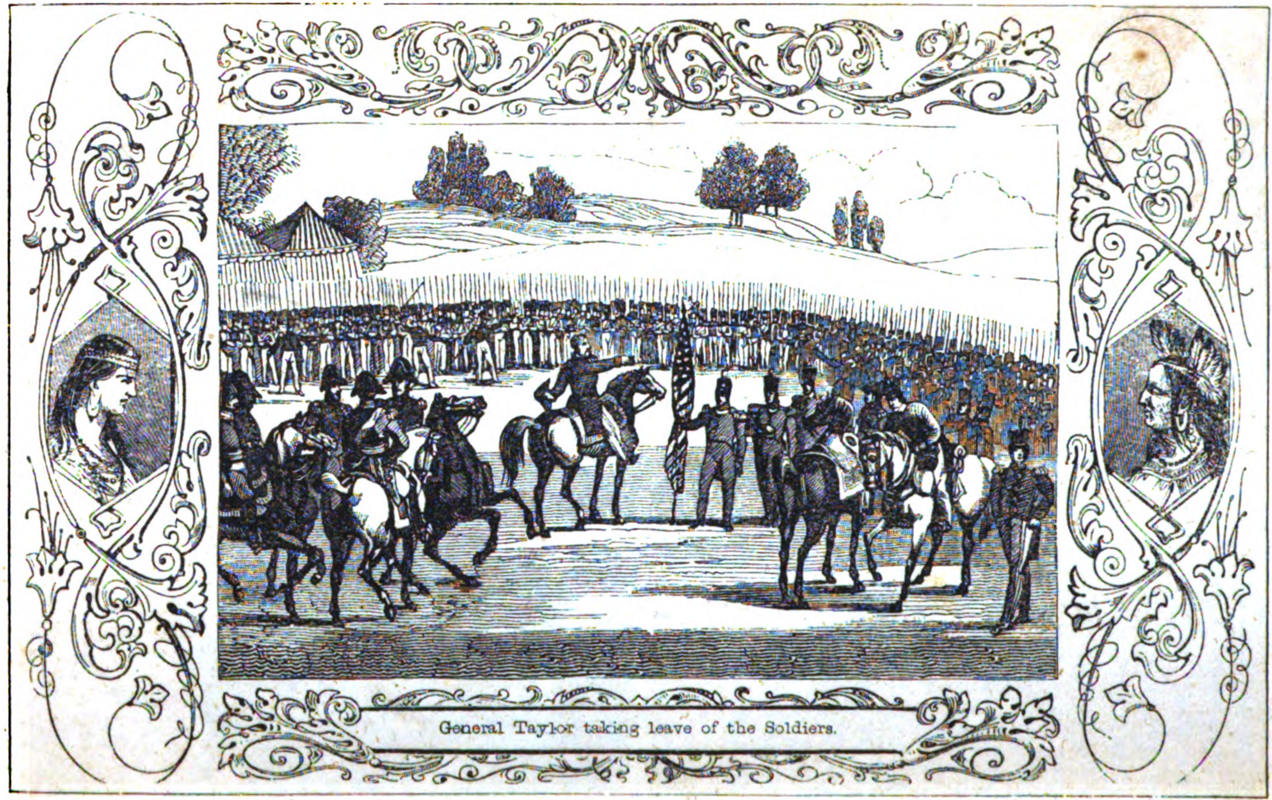
Victoria and Tula Pass.

Little of interest transpired after the general's return until the 15th of December, when he set out for Victoria, leaving the command at Monterey with General Butler. Reaching Montemorelos on the 17th, he was joined by a force from Camargo consisting of the second infantry regiment of Tennessee, and the second infantry (regulars.) At the same time he received a despatch from Worth, conveying the information, that in consequence of the diminished force at Monterey, Santa Anna was about making a vigorous attack upon Saltillo, and if successful, that he was to follow it up by a blow at Parras. Knowing his adversary's force to be large, the general determined to abandon his movement upon Victoria, and by returning to Monterey, to place himself in a position to reinforce the threatened points. He afterwards sent General Quitman to Victoria with the volunteers and a field-battery, which force effected a junction with General Patterson, the commandant at that place.

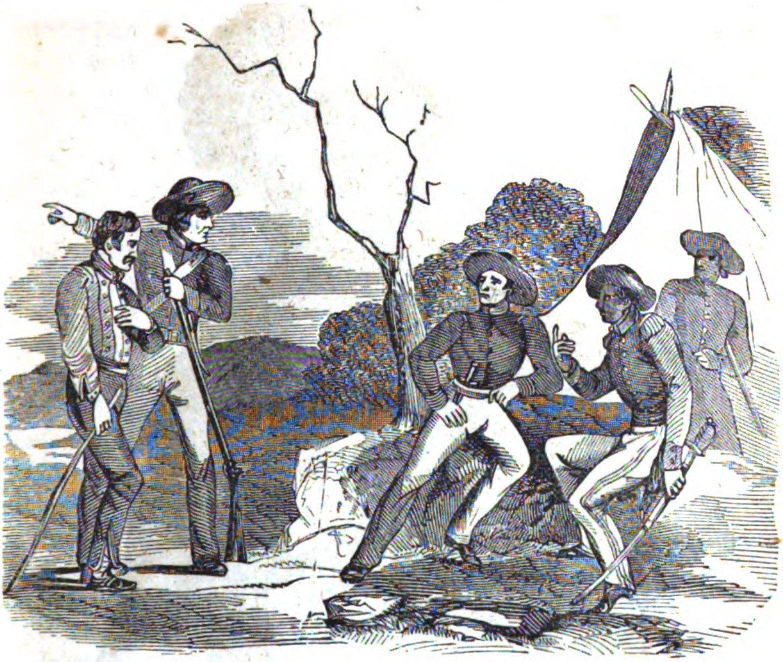
On reaching Monterey, General Taylor was gratified to learn that both Wool and Butler had hastened with reinforcements to Saltillo, in order to render General Worth sufficiently strong to resist the expected attack. The commander himself set out for the same place, but on the road was met by a messenger from Worth, announcing that the rumour as to Santa Anna's intentions was unfounded. Deeming, therefore, his presence there unnecessary, he returned to Monterey, whence he soon after departed for Victoria. Accompanied by Twiggs's division, he reached the town on the 4th of January, swelling the force at that place to five thousand men. With these troops the commander commenced active preparations for marching upon Tampico, and orders to that effect had been issued, when he unexpectedly received from General Scott [January 15,] a demand for part of his army, to assist that officer in his contemplated attack on Vera Cruz.

On receiving this, General Taylor immediately left for Monterey. The order deprived him of nearly all his regulars, together with the volunteer divisions of Generals Worth and Patterson, and the brigades of Quitman and Twiggs. To cover the great tract of country between the Rio Grande and Saltillo, there remained only about five thousand troops, of whom five hundred were regulars. The parting between the general and his war-tried veterans was affecting. During the reading of the order which announced their separation, tears rolled down the cheeks of those who had battled on the Rio Grande and at Monterey. "It is with deep sensibility," says the paper, "that the commanding general finds himself separated from the troops he so long commanded. To those corps, regular and volunteer, who have shared with him the active services of the field, he feels the attachment due to such associations, while to those who are making their first campaign, he must express his regret that he cannot participate with them in its eventful scenes. To all, both officers and men, he extends his heartfelt wishes for their continued success and happiness, confident that their achievements on another theatre will redound to the credit of their country and its arms."

General Taylor remained at Monterey until the latter part of January, when he received information from General Wool at Saltillo, that rumours of an attack by Santa Anna were again prevalent. He determined, therefore, to remain no longer inactive—an alternative never very congenial to his nature—but to push with his small force farther into the enemy's country, and if practicable, to anticipate his attack. In pursance of this daring resolution, he left fifteen hundred men at Monterey, and marched on the 31st of January for Saltillo. On the 15th of February, he ordered Major McCulloch to make a reconnoissance as far as Agua Nueva, about thirty miles off, for the purpose of obtaining information respecting the advance of Santa Anna. At midnight of the 16th, the major arrived within a mile of the town, and was fired upon by a picket guard. Not knowing the road, and the night being very dark, McCulloch advanced cautiously along the road, until his party came abreast of some obstacle that hindered farther approach. Suddenly they were challenged by a Mexican sentinel, and before an answer could be returned were fired on by an apparently large force, drawn up across the road. Totally ignorant



General Taylor taking leave of the Soldiers.

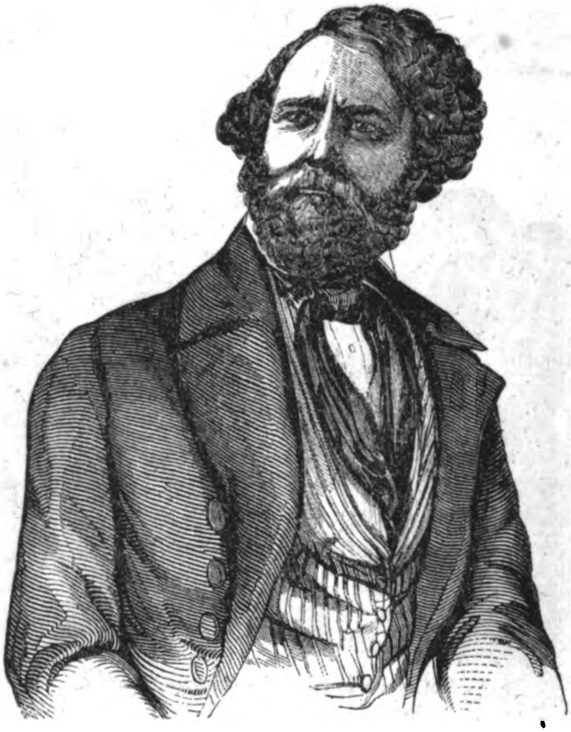


McCulloch examining a Mexican Deserter.

of the number of the enemy, the major ordered a charge, which was gallantly executed, and ended in the total rout of the enemy. This enabled him to obtain the desired information, with which he returned to General Taylor.

On the 20th McCulloch was again despatched on a scout, taking with him but six men. Six miles from Agua Nueva, he met a deserter, who stated that Santa Anna had arrived at Encarnacion with twenty thousand men. The major moved forward, however, until midnight, when he arrived in view of Encarnacion, where found the enemy encamped apparently in great force. Favoured by the darkness of the night, he moved stealthily forward, passed the pickets, and arrived near the camp guard. Here he reconnoitered the camp, in order to ascertain its length. He now determined to send to General Taylor all his party except one man, that they might immediately report, while he remained behind until daylight, for the purpose of obtaining a fuller view of the enemy's camp.

On the following morning the major found himself entangled amid the enemy's pickets, and in full view of their main army. To be captured was certain death, yet escape seemed impossible. By a series of the most brilliant manœuvers he and his companion passed

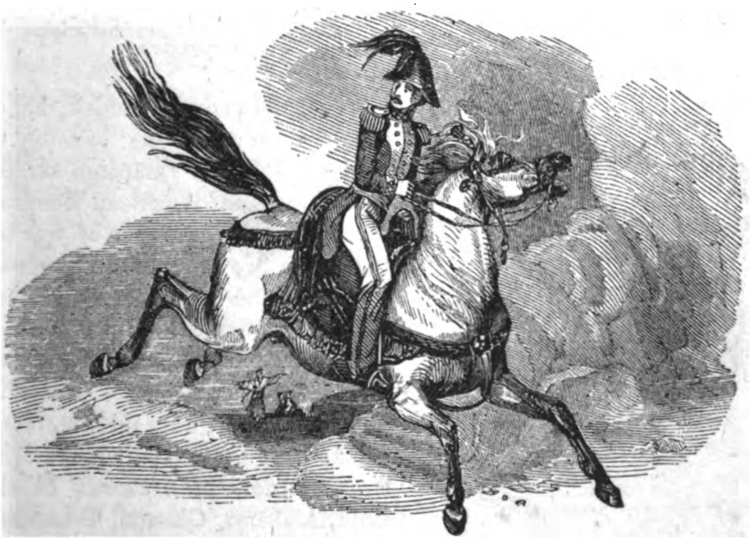


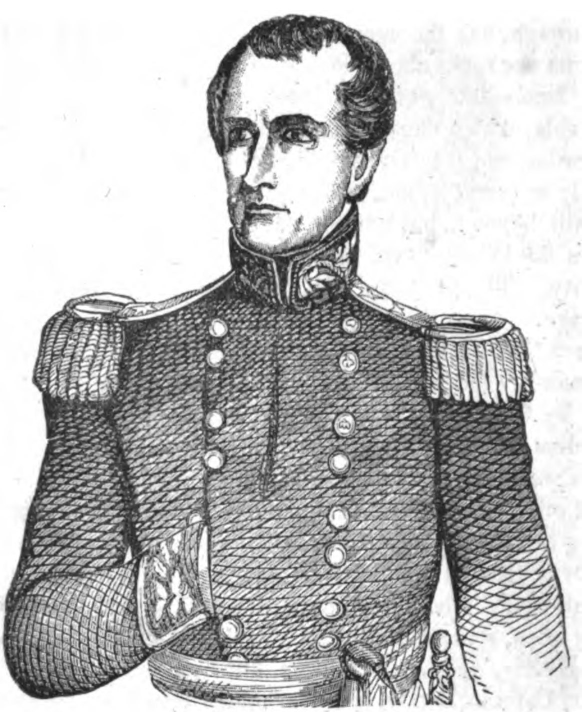
Captain Daniel Drake Henrie.

among the guards, who were induced to believe them Mexicans, and escaping into the main road, set off briskly to join the American army. He found it in full march towards Buena Vista, in consequence of the information sent by the major during the night. During the day, General Taylor reached the strong mountain pass of Angostura, three miles from Buena Vista, and about eight from Saltillo. Here he awaited, with his little army, the threatened attack of Santa Anna.

Two disasters which happened to portions of the American army, a little before this, are worthy of notice. In the latter part of December, Captain May, with two companies of dragoons, was sent to examine the country south of the road between Monterey and Victoria. By means of a difficult pass, scarcely practicable for horses, he reached a rancho, named Labadores, where he seized some stores. In returning by way of the Linares pass, he was obliged to move along the dry bed of a stream, which wound through a defile so narrow that the party were obliged to dismount and lead their horses one by one. On each side the cliffs rose almost perpendicularly to a height of several hundred feet. When the greater part of the squadron had passed through, and the rear guard were about entering, a mine was sprung from the rocks above, and showers of stones came pouring into the pass. Immediately after, a fire of musketry was opened from the opposite side, which caused the eleven men constituting the rear to fly in disorder, and the drivers to desert their mules. May dismounted as speedily as possible, and with twenty men, repassed the defile and went a mile beyond, but without finding his men. Some straggling shots from the heights were received and returned without injury to either party. The total loss was eleven men, twelve horses, and all the baggage.

On the 22d of January, at Encarnacion, two scouting parties under the command of Majors Borland and Gaines, were surrounded and captured by General Minon with an overwhelming body of lancers. The accident seems to have occurred principally from carelessness, and when we compare it with similar expeditions of Walker, McCulloch, and other officers, it is impossible to resist the impression that if fighting had been impracticable, the party might at least have retreated, or concealed itself, before coming in contact with so superior an enemy. The whole command, numbering six officers and sixty-four men, were marched off towards Mexico; but on the road Captain Henrie, one of the officers, effected his escape. Only five days after, Captain Heady, with seventeen Kentucky volunteers, was captured by a party of rancheros.





General Wool

CHAPTER XX.

MARCH OF GENERAL WOOL TO MONCLOVA.

IT has been already mentioned, that on receiving news of the opening of General Taylor's campaign on the Rio Grande, the American Congress recognized the existence of war between the two republics. In consequence of this recognition the president was authorized, on the 13th of May, to accept the service of any number of volunteers, not exceeding fifty thousand. Under this act, requisitions were immediately made upon the governors of Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Texas, for a volunteer force equal to twenty-six regiments, which, with a battalion from the District of Columbia and Maryland, amounted to about twenty-three thousand effective men. They were to serve for the period of twelve months or until the end of the war.

This call met a prompt and patriotic response; the force was organized and sent forward to the points of destination. The greater portion of it was designed to co-operate with the main army on the Rio Grande; the part from the state of Missouri assembled at Fort Leavenworth, to march under General Kearny for Santa Fe; and a third command to be denominated the "Army of the Centre," was placed under Brigadier-General Wool, with instructions to march against the city and province of Chihuahua. It is of the organization and march of the latter force that we are now to speak.

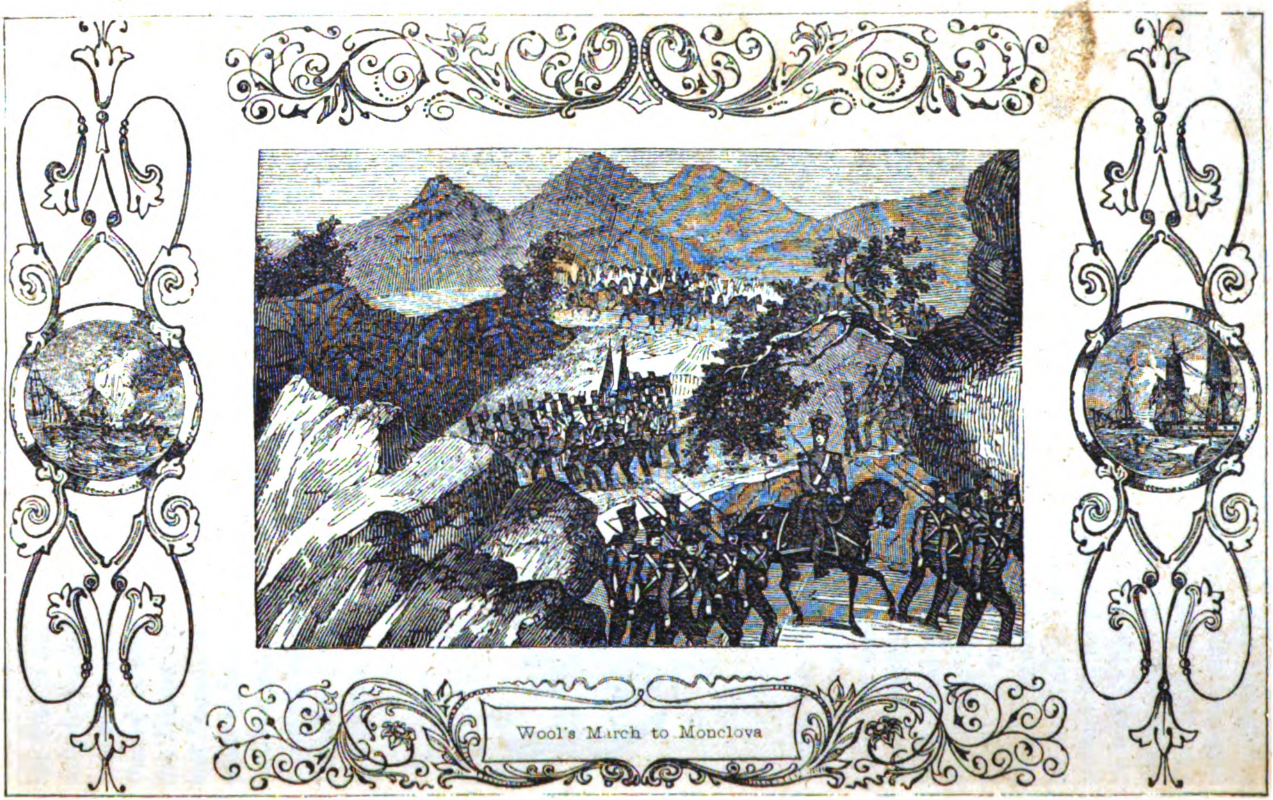
After this plan of operations was adopted, Wool was ordered to Washington, and set out for that city on the day that his instructions reached him. The duties entailed on him by government were arduous in the extreme—to muster into service during the campaign the twelve months' volunteers of six states, and march them into the enemy's country. He landed from the gulf at Labaca, (Texas,) on the 2d of August, 1846, with two regiments of Illinois infantry, under Colonels Hardin and Bissell, and soon after marched for the place of rendezvous, San Antonio de Bexar, situated one hundred and fifty miles to the north. Here he was joined by Colonel Yell's mounted regiment from Arkansas, and that of Colonel Marshall of Kentucky; Captain Washington's flying artillery, Major Bonneville's battalion of regular infantry, and Colonel Harney with four companies of dragoons. The detachments were so tardy in arriving, that August had nearly expired before they had all reached the head-quarters. These men were from the walks of private life, and General Wool, on his arrival, found them utterly destitute of the character and supplies necessary to a campaign.

Encompassed with difficulties, harassed with the murmurs and questionings of raw volunteers, unable to obtain supplies except from a great distance, Wool began his labours. He conducted a correspondence with agents, state governors, officers of the army, and with the war department; he passed personally from state to state, and induced the proper authorities to meet the requisitions of government; and in six weeks he had organized the whole command, sent on a large reinforcement to the Rio Grande, and prepared for his own march through Coahuila.

On the 26th of September, the right wing of Wool's army, numbering twelve hundred and thirty-seven men, under Colonel Harney, moved towards the Rio Grande, en route for Monclova. On the

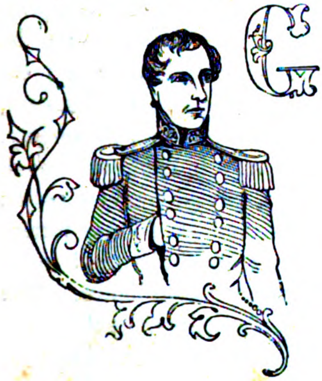
29th, General Wool followed in person, accompanied by his staff and Colonel Hardin's command of five hundred and seventy-four men. The remainder of the army followed soon after—the whole column numbering twenty-eight hundred officers and privates. On the 9th of October, the advance came in sight of the Rio Grande, and on the some day Wool published an order defining the course to be pursued towards the inhabitants of Mexico. The strictest order was enjoined on the volunteers, the unarmed inhabitants being regarded rather as friends than enemies. Wool announced that he had not come to declare war against the peasantry, but against the government. "The people, therefore, who do not take up arms against the United States, and remain quiet and peaceful at their homes, will not be molested or interfered with, either as regards their persons or property; and all those who furnish supplies will be treated kindly, and whatever is received from them will be liberally paid for. It is expected of the troops that they will observe the most rigid discipline and subordination. All depredations on the persons or property of the people of the country are strictly forbidden; and any soldier or follower of the camp, who may so far forget his duty as to violate this injunction, will be severely punished."

AFTER crossing the boundary line, (October 10,) the division marched to Parras, a distance of about four hundred miles. In that march the troops passed through, and took possession of, the cities of Presidio del Rio Grande, Nava, San Fernando, Santa Rosa, Monclova, and Parras. The latter was entered December 6, 1846. Some time was spent in each of these places, during which, the Americans improved their knowledge of the language and manners of the people, with whom they enjoyed an apparently friendly intercourse. The line of march led through a great variety of scenery, marked after three days' progress in Mexico, by high and barren mountains on the south and west, covered with traces of rich ores. Extending from the base of these, were sterile plains and table-lands, scantily supplied, during the dry season, with water. Farther into the interior stretched beautiful, fertile valleys, embosoming quiet towns, haciendas, and cities, and surrounded in the distance by cloud-capt mountains, whose sides were green with cedars. In general, the country bordering on the Rio Grande, south and west of the crossing point, was level, well watered by small streams, and consequently fertile; but the greater part of the territory passed through, westward of this portion,



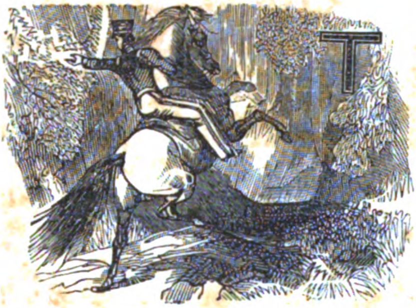
Wool's March to Monclova

abounded in sandy deserts and marshy chaparral, presenting to the eye of the wearied soldier a succession of sterile, arid plains, where the foot of the white man rarely trod, and the deep silence is broken only by the vulture's scream, and the howl of the jackal. This march was more healthful to the soldiers than any which our army has conducted in Mexico. The mere change from the bilious atmosphere of the Mississippi, to the sweeping gales from snow-crowned mountains and boundless plains, was most renovating; while the strict discipline enforced by Wool, the punctual camp exercise, and the march in the open country, together with the general's scrupulous attention to supplying an abundant quantity of healthful provision, caused the Division of the Centre to present an appearance of strength and efficiency unknown to some other portions of the army.



GENERAL WOOL, in order to carry out the original design of the expedition, on reaching Monclova, began preparations for a march upon Chihuahua. Before these were completed, intelligence was received that General Kearny, after capturing Santa Fe, had received the surrender of Chihuahua and the surrounding province without striking a blow. Wool, therefore, considered his advance upon that place as unnecessary; and soon a far more momentous business caused him to merge his command into that of General Taylor.

We have already stated, that soon after the termination of the Monterey armistice, General Worth was sent with a considerable force to Saltillo, and that rumours prevailed of an intended attack of Santa Anna upon that place. In consequence of this report, Wool was ordered from Monclova to Parras, in order to co-operate with Worth, if necessary. Here he remained eleven days, engaged in friendly intercourse with the population. On the 17th of December, he received an express from General Worth, requesting his column to move with all possible despatch for Saltillo. In less than two hours he was on his march. The movement occupied two days and a half, during which the army was roused every morning at one o'clock. The spirit displayed by the men—their alacrity, cheerfulness, and patience, were most admirable. Although expecting soon to meet the enemy, their deportment inspired the staff and other officers with confidence as to the result. The march was a fitting prelude to the battle of Buena Vista.



THE march of this column from San Antonio to Parras is an achievement not to be passed without at least a casual remark. To say that it is one of the most remarkable as well as praiseworthy achievements of the Mexican war, is but cold approbation. It was the accomplishment of a series of prodigies, a triumph over apparent impossibilities, the master efforts of a genius whose energy, and consequent success, appear to the common mind almost as miracles. Wool entered upon his duties without prospect of much reward, with every thing to accomplish and nothing to win. Even the men he was destined to make the soldiers, looked upon him as tyrannical and incapable. The press teemed with censures of his conduct, written by ignorant volunteers, whose only idea of discipline was to fight when they met the enemy, to do as they pleased to neutrals, and to behave in camp as though on a western prairie. A portion of the press, always too careless on such occasions, echoed these censures. Yet, against all this torrent of injustice, Wool bore up, conscious of superior ability, and indifferent to any other reward than the approbation of conscience. The correspondence which he carried on, while organizing the volunteers, was itself a gigantic task; yet, at the same time, discipline was strictly enforced, supplies were collecting, and preparations for marching were carried on. During the march the persons and rights of the Mexicans were scrupulously respected, and it is worthy of remark, that Wool seems to be almost the only American general who has succeeded in gaining the permanent good will of the inhabitants of Mexico. A remarkable proof of this is afforded by the fact, that, when about leaving Parras, he was waited upon by a number of ladies, who requested permission to attend to the sick and disabled, which he was obliged to leave there; and when the division had marched for Saltillo, these wives and daughters of the enemy nursed their feeble invaders with the most affecting tenderness.

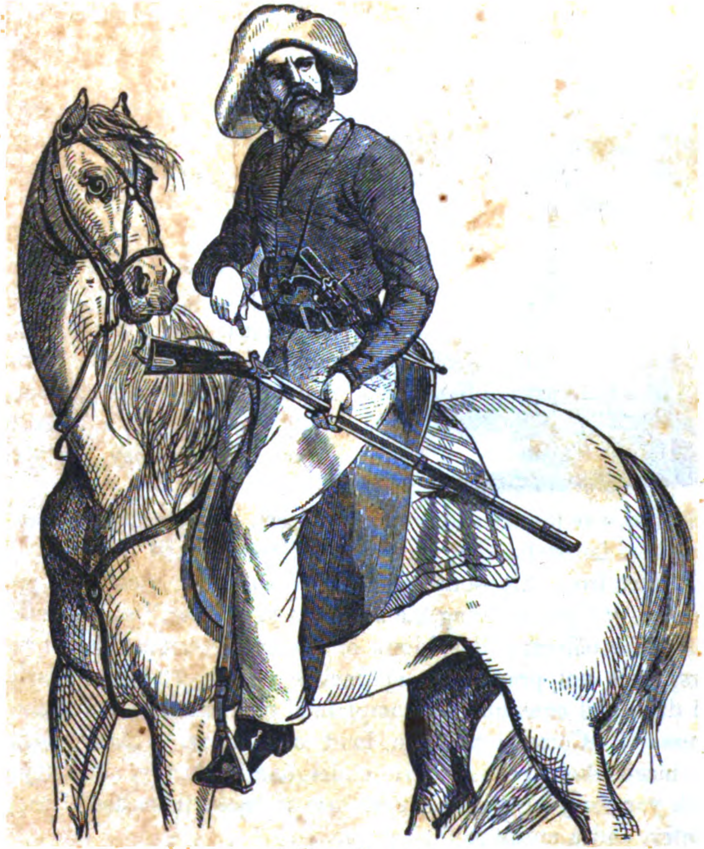
But the greatest eulogium which can be given to Wool, is the report of the conduct of his column at Buena Vista. Amid any command, his troops would have there been conspicuous; but when Worth's, Twiggs's, and Quitman's divisions were withdrawn to the Rio Grande, it was upon Wool's troops that General Taylor relied, in his terrible struggle with Santa Anna. Fortunate was it that his able auxiliary was not withdrawn with the others. Fortune, hitherto averse to Wool's reward, seemed at length to relent; and when only disappointment seemed to await his long, laborious exertions, she unexpectedly opened to him a more glorious field of triumph than Chihuahua; the wrestlings for victory with the greatest chief of Mexico, amid the cliffs and gorges of Buena Vista. There his men learned the value of those duties which they had once despised; there they were enabled to meet regular troops, and grapple with them as regulars; and there, also, the man who had formerly appeared harsh and unreasonable, was regarded, while moving from rank to rank, as a controlling spirit, he who, with the commander-in-chief, would maintain his position until cut to pieces. It is stated on good authority, that long before the battle, Wool chose Buena Vista as a position admirably situated for defensive operations, and that it was upon his suggestion General Taylor fell back to it, on the afternoon of February 21st.

THE nature of Wool's duties was appreciated by his commander, who declares that his obligations are especially due to him. "The high state of discipline and instructions of several of the volunteer regiments was attained under his command, and to his vigilance and arduous services before the action, and his gallantry and activity on the field, a large share of our success may justly be attributed."

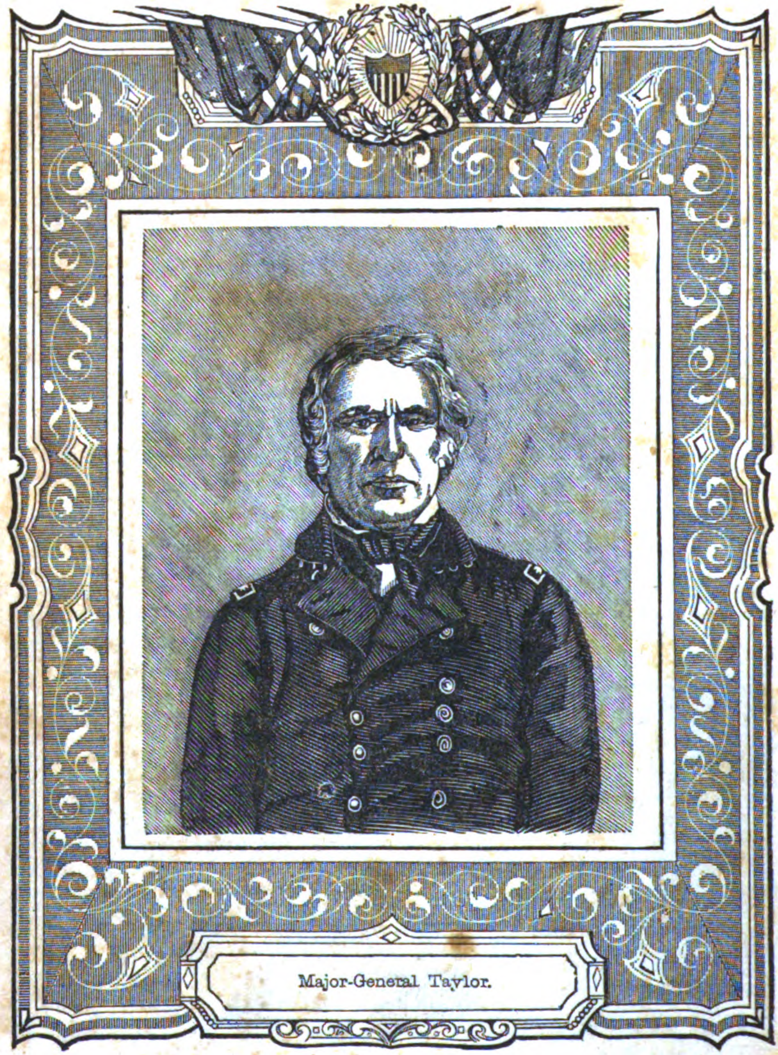
Similar was the testimony of his officers, in reply to his order bidding them farewell, when their term of service had expired. With an extract from this—one most remarkable—we close the present chapter. "Upon entering the service a year since," say the officers, "they [the officers and soldiers of the first regiment, Illinois volunteers] were not prepared to appreciate the importance of discipline and drill, and consequently complained of them as onerous and unnecessary. Complaints were loud and many. Their judgment convinced, their feelings have undergone a change, and they now thank you for your untiring exertions to make them useful to their country, and a credit to their state.

"Whatever, sir, of service, we may have done our common country, or whatever honour we may have done the state of Illinois, to General John E. Wool is due the credit. You, sir, brought your column into the field, well provided for, and well disciplined, and fought them well when you got them there; and should our country again need our services in the field, it would be our proudest wish to again meet the enemy under the immediate command of one in whose energy, watchfulness, and courage, we and the whole army have the most unlimited confidence."

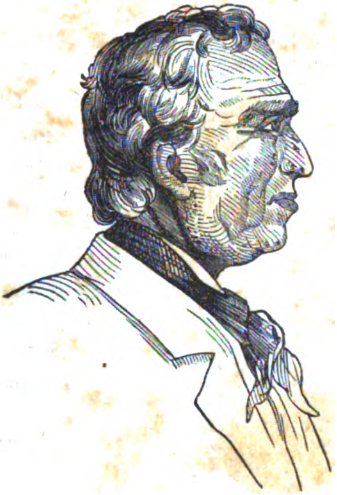
Such a testimonial as this, unsought and disinterested as it is, speaks volumes in behalf of this able, experienced, humane, and courageous commander.



A Texas Ranger.



Major-General Taylor.



CHAPTER XXI.

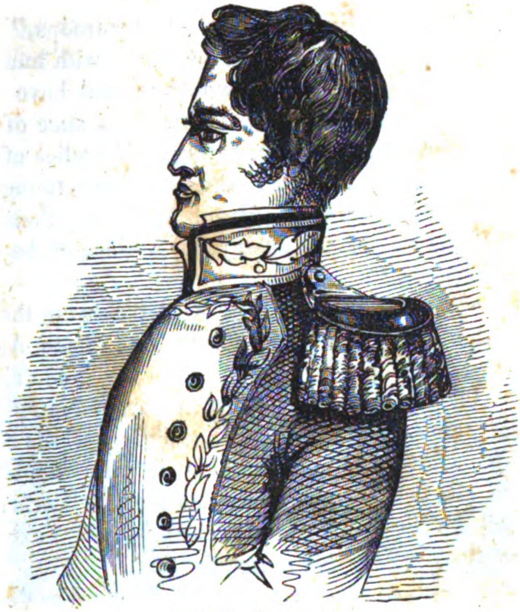
SANTA ANNA'S MARCH TO BUENA VISTA. BATTLE-GROUND AND SKIRMISH OF FEBRUARY 22.

THE last few chapters have been devoted principally to the movements of the American forces. Meanwhile important operations had been transpiring in Mexico, at which a glance is necessary in order to have a full and correct view of the great struggle at Buena Vista.

General Paredes, who, as we have seen, succeeded Herrera in the government of Mexico, soon evinced his utter inability to maintain the popularity to which he owed his position. He came into office as a military ruler; and both his foreign and his domestic policy were but a code of martial and tyrannical laws. After evincing a desire to prosecute the war with the United States, he adopted no measures to meet so heavy a responsibility; but, on the contrary, altered materially the constitution respected by his predecessors, deprived the masses of the elective franchise, abridged other liberties, and imprisoned or banished the editors of such papers as opposed him.

In a country like Mexico, such conduct could not long be displayed before being submitted to the ordeal of a political revolution. Yucatan speedily revolted, and has since remained independent; the citizens of Vera Cruz opposed the act depriving them of the elective franchise, while ambitious politicians, military aspirants, and other similar characters, united with the injured populace, and fanned the flame of insurrection. Some of these being detected and imprisoned, the movement broke out in open revolt. News of Arista's discomfiture on the Rio Grande added to the tumult. The vengeance of an injured people concentrated itself, that it might descend as an avalanche on the author of national misrule and calamity. Paredes quailed before the storm, and implored help and money from the clergy. The latter met in council, and, after mature deliberation, decided that the funds of the church could not be appropriated to any other than ecclesiastical purposes. The revolutionists, elated by this declaration, issued a proclamation against his government, and elected a provisional one on the basis of the constitution of 1824. This body immediately invited the return of all persons banished on account of politics, especially "his excellency, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who is from this time recognized as general-in-chief of all the forces engaged." The nomination of this popular leader gave an impulse to the revolutionary movement, which Paredes was utterly unable to quell; so that, after a feeble resistance, he abandoned the capital, and fled towards the interior. He was soon arrested and thrown into prison. General Salas was named provisional president, and immediately declared for Santa Anna, affirming the constitution of 1824 to be in force, and calling upon Congress to meet on the 6th of December, under its rules and restrictions.

All this had transpired during the time that General Taylor remained on the Rio Grande, preparing for a march against Monterey. Santa Anna was then at Havana. On receiving the above-mentioned invitation he immediately embarked for Vera Cruz, and after passing through the American gulf squadron, by permission of President Polk, landed at that city on the 16th of August, 1846. On the same day he placed himself at the head of the movement in that district, and issued a proclamation, stating the causes of Arista's defeat, the unmilitary conduct of the war, and his designs as to its future progress. His health being somewhat impaired, he retired to his hacienda near Vera Cruz, where he remained until the early part of September, when he advanced to Ayotla. On the 15th he entered



Santa Anna.

the capital, amid the enthusiastic shouts and congratulations of thousands.

Under these flattering auspices Santa Anna commenced his government as supreme dictator of Mexico. He entered upon the most energetic plans for raising and equipping troops, and, instead of remaining in the capital as president, he appointed a substitute, and placed himself at the head of the army. Decrees were issued, calling for funds, creating officers, and providing for the raising of supplies. He placed his head-quarters at San Luis, where an army of twenty-thousand men, mostly raw recruits, were soon collected. To prepare these for the campaign, Santa Anna made the most vigorous exertions, even sacrificing a great portion of his own estates. The populace entered into his measures with enthusiasm, and, notwithstanding his numerous difficulties, he moved, early in January, 1847, against General Taylor. The march was a terrible one. Amid burning deserts, and over bleak mountains, without a drop of fresh water, or any provisions except raw corn, and occasionally a small slice of ham for each man, the Mexican general conducted his army, day after day. Yet such was their confidence in his ability, such the strange hold which he had taken on their feelings, that they bore all without a murmur, and followed their chief with enthusiasm and childlike devotion. No man in Mexico, except Santa Anna, could have kept them together one day. "Our troops," writes one of their number, after the battle, "are perishing with hunger and thirst. They have not drunk water in two days, and have eaten nothing since the day they were at Encarnacion, and a slice of roasted meat at La Vaca. The soldiers are scattering, and bodies of them fighting and charging upon the enemy wherever they thought there was water, and we have seen them disputing among themselves, totally regardless of the fire of the enemy, for a piece of ham found upon the dead Americans."

GREAT as were these difficulties, we find Santa Anna emerging from the mountains, in the latter part of January, and moving rapidly towards Saltillo. After manœuvering in the neighbourhood for some time, he reached Encarnacion on the 20th of February, and next day resumed his march for Saltillo.

The field of Buena Vista is, in its topographical features, so irregular and intricate as to render a clear appreciation of the various movements of the battle fought there almost impossible, except to a military man. A general description, however, avoiding details of the military changes in position, will enable the careful reader to form a tolerably correct idea of the relative situation of the forces at the beginning of the action.

Buena Vista is a small village or rancho, situated five miles southwest of Saltillo, on the road between that place and San Luis Potosi. The American baggage and supply train were here stationed during the whole battle, and upon the small force left to guard it, a portion of the Mexican cavalry from their right wing charged late on the 23d, On each side of the San Luis road, precipitous mountains rose to a great height, thus forming a narrow valley very difficult for the movements of a large military force. On the west side of the road, and extending to the foot of the mountains, was a labyrinth of deep and impassable gulleys, which rendered all travelling on that part of the valley impossible. Three miles below Buena Vista, these gulleys approached so near the base of the eastern ridge of mountains, as to narrow the valley to the width of the road, from which it received the name of the Pass of Angostura, or the narrows. A small force placed at this spot would be utterly inaccessible from the west, almost equally so from the mountains of the east, and could hold the road against a direct attack from a vastly superior foe. In this strong defile was placed Washington's battery of three guns, supported by two companies of the 1st Illinois volunteers. West of this pass, the right wing of the American army was drawn up on the sides of the mountains, their eastern extremity stretching towards the pass. On a broad plateau or table-land formed by extensions of the eastern mountain chain was the left of the army, their east flank covered by cliffs, and their west by Washington's battery. On the extreme east, among the high mountains, were situated on the evening of the 22d, the American light troops, with whom and the Mexican light infantry the skirmish of that day took place.

SUCH in general was the position of General Taylor's army. The position of the different regiments composing the two wings was as follows: On a plateau, directly east of Washington's battery, were six companies of Colonel Hardin's 1st Illinois regiment, flanked on the left by the 2d Kentucky regiment, and the 2d Illinois regiment covering Sherman's battery. These were charged on the afternoon of the 23d by the Mexican infantry from Agua Nueva, after the latter had repulsed the 2d Indiana regiment, and O'Brien's artillery. East of these troops, on another plateau, was [February 22d] the Arkansas cavalry, who were attacked late on the 23d. North of these, on the broad table-land, Colonel Davis's Mississippi riflemen were drawn up in battle array with artillery in the centre and on each flank. These were charged by the Mexican cavalry after the repulse of the Indiana troops, but maintained their ground. At this time the enemy's column became divided, a body of nearly two thousand being crowded into a pass, where the artillery did fearful execution among them. At this point, Colonel May, and Pike's squadron of dragoons were preparing to charge them, when a flag of truce from Santa Anna caused a suspension of hostilities, which enabled them to retreat. That of Santa Anna advanced along the San Luis road, from Agua Nueva, a rancho, twelve miles south of Buena Vista. On the afternoon of the 22d, the main body was observed moving northward over the hills in perfect order of battle, their direction being towards the American left. Before evening, their light troops were detached still farther to the east or [American] left, and on our reaching the high mountains became engaged, as has already been stated, with the American light troops. On the following morning this skirmish was renewed, while at the same time the main army wound their way northward among the mountain ridges, and divided into two portions, one of which charged the Kentucky and Illinois regiments, of the American left, while the other portion, moving towards the north, again divided into two columns, one of which charged the Mississippi rifles, and the other moved round in a western direction, and attacked Buena Vista.

We now proceed to fill up the foregoing sketch with a description of the battle. The immediate command of the American army was intrusted to General Wool, who planned the action, and stationed the troops in their respective positions. At eight o'clock on the 22d, he received notice that the Mexican army was at Agua Nueva. During the previous night, Colonel Hardin's regiment had thrown up a parapet on the height left of the road, and extended a parapet and small ditch from the right of the road around the edge of a gulley. Wool directed a similar ditch and parapet to be dug across the road for the protection of Washington's artillery, leaving a narrow passage next to the mountains, which was closed up by running into it two wagons loaded with stone. At nine o'clock, the advance pickets discovered the van of the enemy, and on receiving their report, Wool immediately sent information to the commanding general, who was at Saltillo, and ordered the troops stationed at Buena Vista to be brought forward.

Soon after sunrise the Mexican army was observed moving over the hills to the south, their infantry drawn up in columns, supported by deep sections of cavalry. As the heavy masses continued to arrive, moving in regular order, they presented a most stirring spectacle. Their new uniforms and burnished arms, glittering in the morning sun, and quivering with thousands of reflections, seemed like a sea of steel; while the rows of cavalry presented a pomp and grandeur of appearance far beyond any thing in the American army. All the morning they continued to arrive, until the whole southern horizon blazed on every side with the intolerable splendour of their arms.

At eleven o'clock, General Taylor was waited upon by Surgeon Liegenburg of the Mexican army, who carried a white flag, and the following communication from his commander.

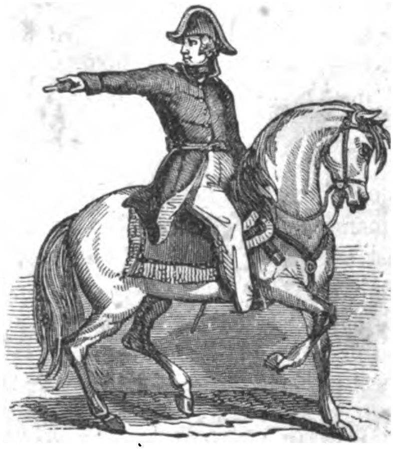
"You are surrounded by twenty thousand men, and cannot, in any human probability, avoid suffering a rout, and being cut to pieces with your troops; but as you deserve consideration and particular esteem, I wish to save you from a catastrophe, and for that purpose give you this notice, in order that you may surrender at discretion, under the assurance that you will be treated with the consideration belonging to the Mexican character, to which end you will be granted an hour's time to make up your mind, to commence from the moment when my flag of truce arrives in your camp.

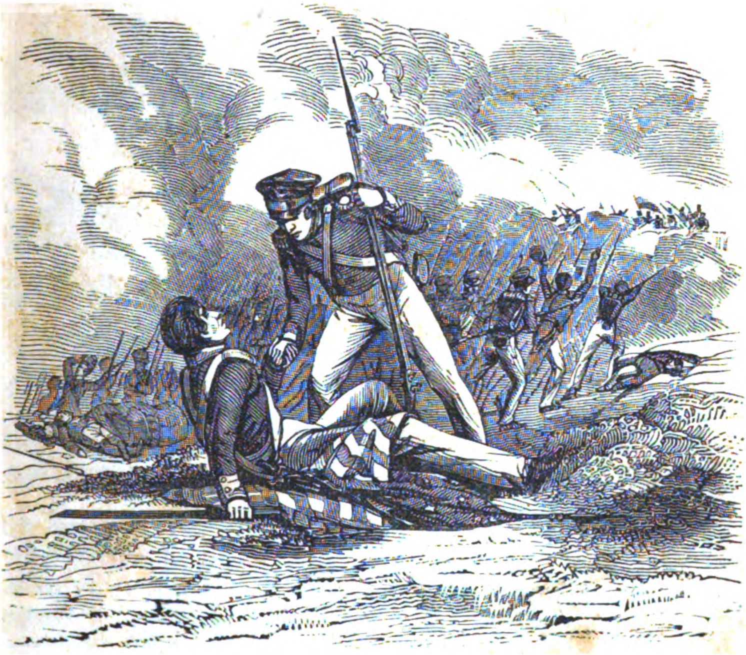
"With this view, I assure you of my particular consideration."

The American general immediately wrote the following answer.

"In reply to your note of this date, summoning me to surrender my forces at discretion, I beg leave to say that I decline acceding to your request."

An immediate attack was now expected, but this Santa Anna still delayed, as his rear columns had not yet arrived. At two o'clock, P. M., while the enemy's light infantry were moving up the sides of the mountain, in the ravines east of the road, they came in contact with the American light troops, and opened upon them with a large howitzer. On hearing the firing, General Taylor, who had arrived on the battle-field, supposed that a general attack was about to commence, and made such changes in the disposition of the Illinois and Kentucky regiments as were necessary to secure the plateau east of Washington's battery, which commanded the road to Saltillo, and was the key to his whole position. Occasional shots were thrown from the howitzer until after three o'clock, when the American light troops, under Colonel Marshall, engaged the enemy's infantry on the side of the mountain. The nature of the ground materially affected his movements, so that instead of the action increasing in extent, it sometimes dwindled down into unimportant skirmishes, and at others assumed a phase of some moment. The effect, however, upon the American army was most striking. To the far greater part, it was the first event of actual war they had ever witnessed; and as they stood on the broad plateaus watching the struggle, or wound through the narrow defiles from one position to another, their feelings were excited to the highest pitch. During this time the main body of the enemy, had collected in the road near a rancho, named Encantada, from whence they advanced in a north-east direction, towards a defile leading to the key of the American position. Their masses gathered in order of attack, but it was soon evident that no effort was to be made that night. Meanwhile the firing to the east continued, each party manœuvering so as to gain an advantageous position for the night. The sun set before the action terminated, and even after darkness had covered the wild scenery, the firing of light arms was heard from the heights. The loss on the part of the Americans was very slight, while more than thirty Mexicans are said to have been killed and wounded. After sunset General Taylor became convinced that no serious attack was intended that night, and accordingly, with the Mississippi regiment and a squadron of dragoons, he returned to Saltillo. The night was excessively cold, yet the Americans bivouacked on the bleak rocks, without fires, and upon their arms. The scene was solemn and impressive; high rocks apparently shutting out even the twinkling of stars, soared up on every side until lost in the blackened air; thick darkness gathered around the little army, the air seemed clotted with oppressive vapours, and a silence that pained the ear more than the jarring of cannon, hung around. Now and then a solitary vulture moved heavily through the gloom, making the stillness more awful by his foreboding scream. Many a young soldier, whose heart beat high with the longings of ambition, looked up fearfully that night through the frowning shade, and turned away to dream of home and sleep his last sleep.



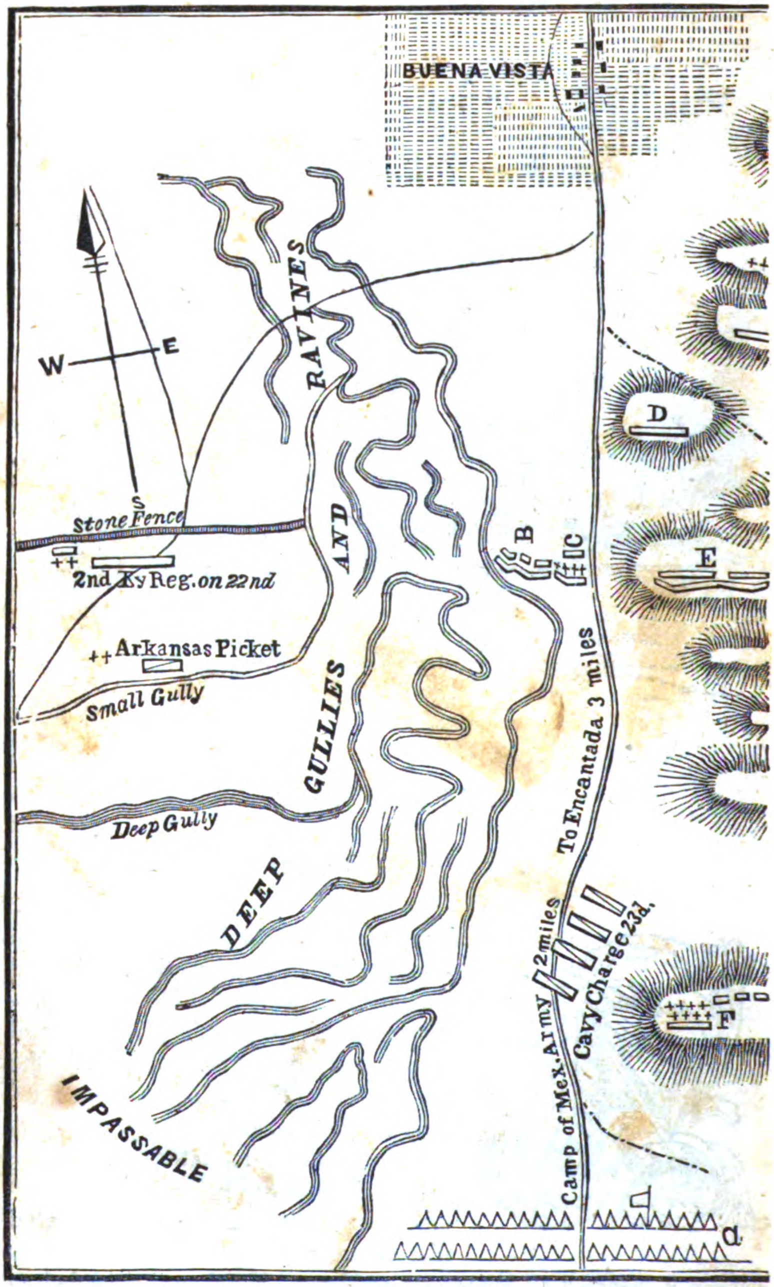


CHAPTER XXII.

BATTLE OF BUENA VISTA.

AT daylight on the 23d of February, both armies were in rapid motion. General Taylor had reached Saltillo on the previous night. Near this place General Minon had manœuvered all day, for the purpose of cutting off the expected retreat of the American army, and perhaps of making an attempt upon the town. In order to be prepared for any emergency, the commander appointed four companies of Illinois volunteers to garrison it, assisted by Webster's artillery. He then proceeded to Buena Vista, and ordered forward all the available troops from that place.

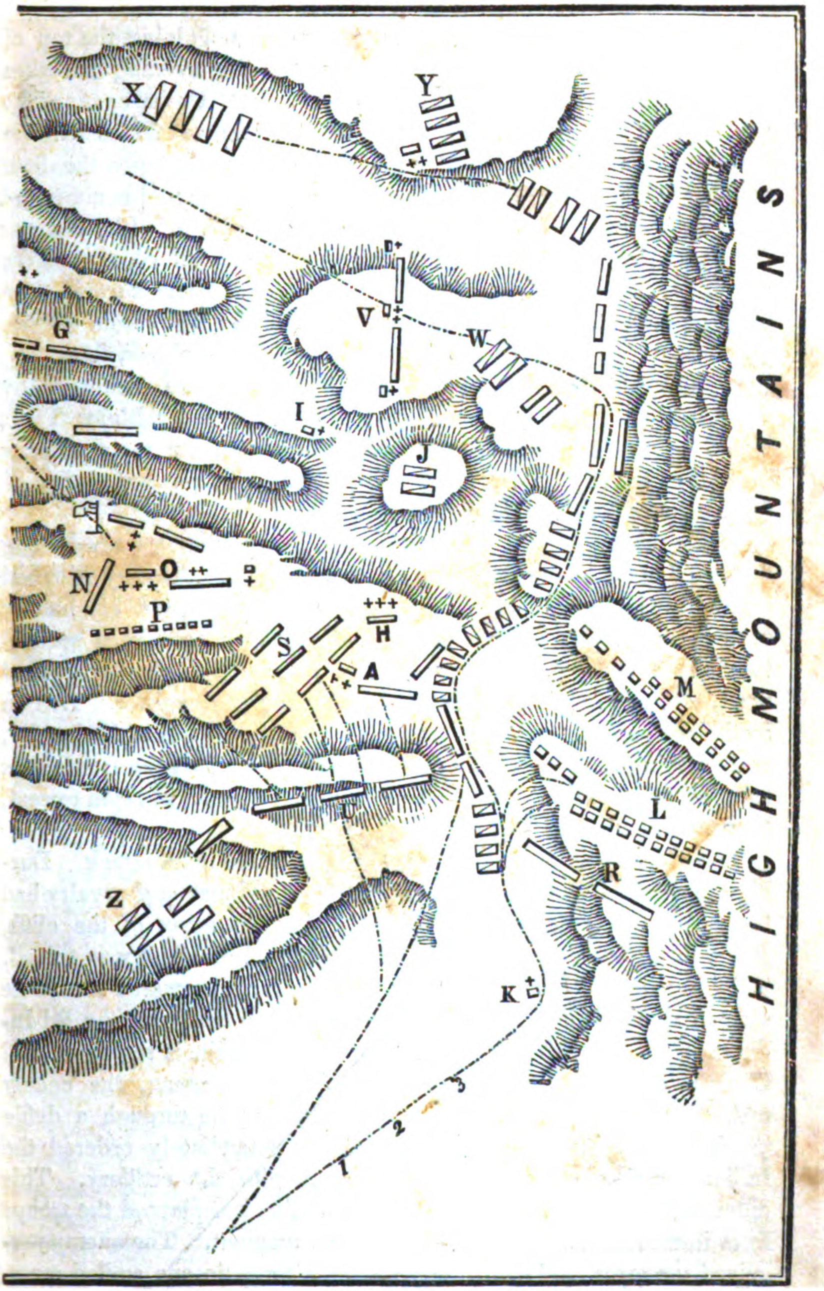
PLAN OF THE BATTLE


BUENA VISTA
W
E
S
RAVINES
AND
GULLIES
Stone Fence
2nd Ky Reg. on 22nd
Arkansas Picket
Small Gully
Deep Gully
DEEP
IMPASSABLE
B
C
D
E
F
To Encantada 3 miles
Camp of Mex. Army 2 miles
Cavy Charge 23d.
a

REFERENCES.

A. 2d Indiana Regiment, with O'Brien's artillery, A. M. 23d, 1st Position.
B. 2 Companies Illinois 1st Regiment, February 22d and 23d.
C. Washington's Artillery, Feb. 22d and 23d.
D. 2d Kentucky Regiment, A. M. February 22d.
E. 6 Companies Illinois 1st Regiment, Colonel Hardin, February 22d.
P. Enemy's Battery, 8 pieces.
G. Indiana Brigade, February 22d.
H. Kilburne's Artillery, detached A. M. Feb. 23.
I. 2d Illinois Regiment, A. M. Feb. 23d.
J. Arkansas Cavalry, February 22d.
K. Howitzer supporting Light Infantry.
L. Mexican Light Infantry, Evening Feb. 22.
M. U. S. light troops, Evening Feb. 22d.

OF BUENA VISTA.



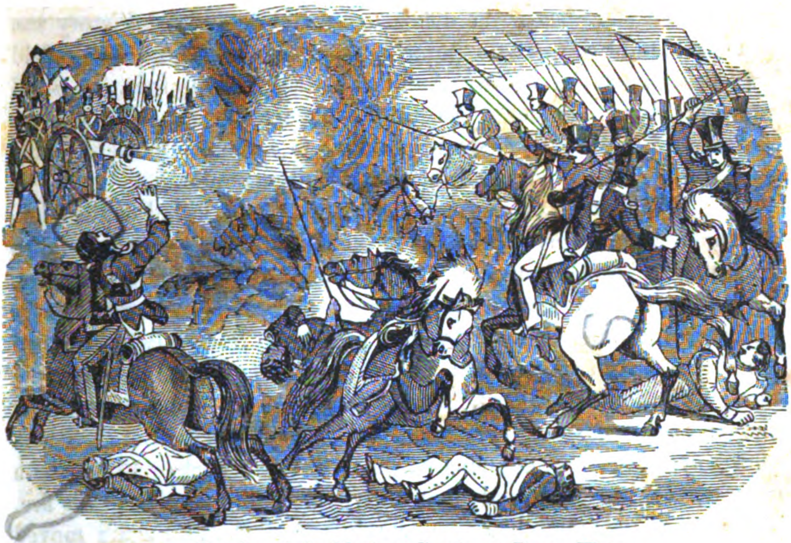
REFERENCES.

N. 2d Kentucky Regiment, 9 A. M. Feb. 23d.
O. 2d Illinois Regiment, with section Sherman's Artillery, A. M. 23d.
P. 2d. Kentucky Regiment skirmishing 23d.
R. Infantry Reserves.
S. Mexican Infantry charging, 3 P. M. Feb. 23d.
V. Mississippi Rifles, 3d Indiana Regiment, and Artillery, 12 M. Feb. 23d.
W. Mexican Cavalry charging Miss. Rifles.
X. Enemy's Lancers charging Rancho.
Y. May and Pike's squadron of Dragoons, 12 M. Feb. 23d.
Z. Cavalry Charge. 3 P. M.
1. 2. 3. Route of the Enemy's light troops, evening 22d.
a. Part of the Enemy's camp.

During the night the enemy had succeeded in gaining the top of the mountain, where the skirmish of the preceding evening had taken place, and in passing thence to the left and rear. Under cover of the night about fifteen hundred men had been thrown forward to the same position, and were now prepared for an attack upon the light troops of Colonel Marshall. Here the battle of the 23d commenced at an early hour. Heavy volleys of musketry, succeeded by the roar of cannon and shouts of officers, convinced General Wool that the left wing was to be the principal point of attack. The intrepid riflemen, animated by their commander, received the shock from the immense masses of the enemy with coolness, pouring back, in return, the contents of their unerring rifles. Soon they were reinforced by three companies of the 2d Illinois volunteers, under Major Trail. The troops covered themselves behind ridges of the mountains, in positions perfectly secure from artillery, and where every charge of the enemy was met with advantage.

While this movement was going on, a heavy column moved along the San Luis road, against the American centre. As they marched rapidly towards this point, Captain Washington opened his battery from the pass. So terrible was the effect, that whole lines seemed to sink at every discharge, and long gaps in the densely packed mass, told of the sweeping entrance of grape and canister. Led on by their officers, the survivors pressed forward, under this withering fire, until within full range of the captain's artillery, when the front ranks recoiled in confusion. The whole column was soon in rapid retreat, leaving behind masses of dead and dying.

These, however, were but preparations for the main attack. During the whole morning, an immense force of infantry and cavalry had been concentrated among the ridges, and under cover of the cliffs, at the foot of the mountain on which Colonel Marshall was posted. They now commenced filing through the gorges towards the large plateau where Brigadier-General Lane was posted, with the 2d Indiana regiment, under Colonel Bowles, the 2d Illinois regiment, and Captain O'Brien's artillery. On gaining the plateau, the enemy rushed on in crowded masses, the cavalry pouring through a defile to charge the American infantry. Lane immediately ordered the Indiana regiment forward, supporting it with the artillery. This movement seems to have been unfortunate, as it separated the troops from immediate support at a most critical moment. The enemy perceived the error, and collecting all their force in one united mass, they charged like an avalanche along the edge of the plateau. The Indiana troops had not reached the designated position, when Colonel Bowles, who commanded the regiment, without the authority of General Lane, gave the order, "*Cease firing and retreat.*" The



Repulse of the Mexican Cavalry at Buena Vista.

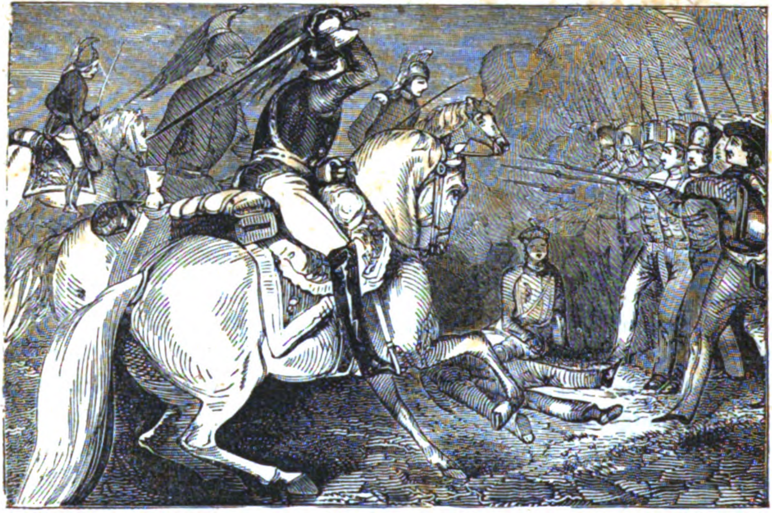
troops obeyed as a matter of course; and the consequences were very disastrous. The services of this regiment, which, up to that moment had behaved with great gallantry, were nearly lost during the rest of the battle, as only a portion of them was rallied by the officers, the remainder retreating to Buena Vista. Captain Carleton, in his account of the battle, expresses the opinion that if this regiment had not been thrown out of service by the order of its colonel, General Pacheco's division would have been cut up, and the success of the day would have been more complete. While engaged in rallying the Indiana troops, Lieutenant Charles Lincoln, a highly esteemed staff officer was killed.

Unaware of the loss of his support, O'Brien galloped on until he arrived at the spot pointed out by General Lane. The spectacle from this position was sufficient to appal even a veteran. The hills, on every side, were alive with troops; horsemen were pouring over the ground, and artillery vomiting forth floods of flaming death. The rocks seemed to start and topple with the hurrying multitude, and shouts of officers and cheers of men rose, like the roar of ocean, above the din of battle. The intrepid O'Brien saw the vast host rushing towards him, and with a quick, anxious glance, he turned to see where was his support. He was alone. With three pieces of artillery, and a few cannoneers, he was exposed to the shock of the huge multitude. If he yielded, the battle was lost, and certain destruction seemed inevitable if he stood. Flushed with victory, the heavy columns of cavalry came pouring on from the discomfiture of the Indianians, their horses crowding upon each other, and surrounded on all sides by the dense masses of infantry. Victory was concentrated at this single point, and every eye on the battle-field was bent upon the issue. Amid the deafening uproar, the shrill voice of Wool was heard far in the distance, calling forward the troops of Illinois. The sound seemed to animate O'Brien's little company, and they prepared for the fearful encounter.

By this time most of the cannoneers had been killed or disabled, the captain had received a wound in the leg and two horses had fallen under him. Three thousand Mexican infantry were pouring showers of musketry upon him, while a battery, three hundred yards to his left, was vomiting forth grape and canister. Suddenly he opened his fire. Companies melted before him; alleys and gaps opened along all the enemy's front, and the unerring shot rattled upon their cannon, sweeping artillery, man, and horse to destruction. Struck with horror, the front columns wavered and fell back. Elated with success, O'Brien advanced about fifty yards, and continued his fire. The van paused, rallied to receive reinforcements, and again moved forward. In rapid succession, one discharge after another was hurled against them; but each gap was filled as soon as made, and in one desperate mass they poured towards the captain's position. Finding it impossible longer to resist their progress he gave them his last discharge, and withdrew to the American line.

ON arriving here, he had not a cannoneer to work the guns, all having been killed or disabled. It being impossible to replace them, he was compelled to apply to Captain Washington, who furnished him with two six-pounders. With these he again ascended the plateau, where he came in contact with a strong line of infantry and cavalry, covered by a heavy battery. He was himself supported by a body of infantry posted in two ravines on his right and left. The remainder of the American artillery and infantry were engaged with the enemy about half a mile to his left. O'Brien kept the Mexicans in check, while the troops to the left drove the body, opposed to them, round the head of the ravine, where they united with those opposed to the captain. About this time, the latter received orders to advance, and at the same time, the enemy, finding themselves strong by their junction, came on to meet him. The position of affairs was most critical, for if the Mexcians succeeded in forcing the American position the day was theirs. There being no artillery opposed to them but O'Brien's section and another piece, it was all important for him to maintain his ground until the guns on the left could come round the ravine to join him. He determined, therefore, to hold this position until the enemy reached the muzzles of his guns. The struggle was a terrible one. Each party put forth its utmost strength, and the feelings of the soldier were wound to a pitch of enthusiasm, that made him reckless of death itself. The enemy sunk down by scores, and a body of lancers, charging the Illinois troops, were compelled to fall back. Still the main body rushed on, shaking the mountain passes with the trampling of their armed thousands, and shouting above the uproar of battle. The wounded and dying were crushed in their furious charge, and soon their horses were within a few yards of O'Brien's pieces. Here they received the last discharge, and as the driving hail smote their columns, a groan of anguish followed, and horse and rider sunk down, and rolled over the rocky surface in the arms of death. It was a dreadful moment, and as the columns swayed to and fro beneath the shock, and then sternly united for the headlong leap, companies that were mere spectators grew pale for the result. Although O'Brien was losing men and horses with alarming rapidity, he gave orders again to fire, when suddenly the few recruits who were fit for duty lost their presence of mind, and with all his efforts, they could not be kept to the guns. Mortified to find the fruits of his gigantic efforts torn from him, the captain rode round his guns with startling quickness, urging his followers by voice and action; but it was in vain—no man on the field could have rallied them; and after staying at his post to the last, he retired slowly and sullenly. He lost his pieces, but by his gallant stand he had kept the enemy in check long enough to save the day.

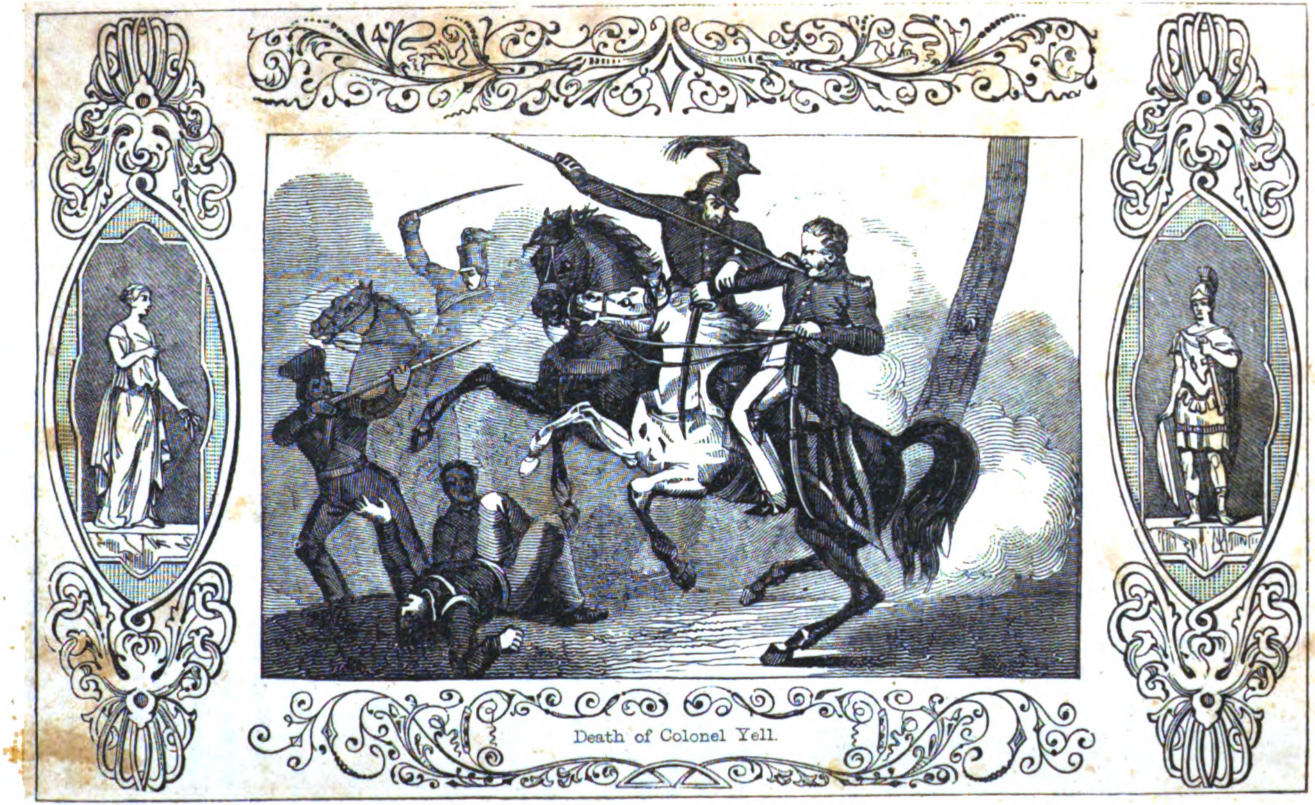
About the same time the 2d Illinois regiment, under Colonel Bissell, having become completely outflanked, were compelled to fall back. Colonel Marshall's light troops, on the extreme left, came down from their mountainous position, and joined the American main army. Masses of cavalry and infantry were now pouring through the defiles on the American left, in order to gain the rear north of the large plateau. At this moment General Taylor arrived upon the field from Saltillo. As the Mexican infantry turned the American flank, they came in contact with Colonel Davis's Mississippi riflemen, posted on a plateau north of the principal one. The 2d Kentucky regiment, and a section of artillery, under Captain Bragg, had previously been ordered to this position from the right, and arrived at a most important crisis. As the masses of the enemy emerged from the defiles,



Davis's Infantry repulsing the Mexican Cavalry.

to the table-land above, they opened upon the riflemen, and the battle soon became deeply interesting. The lancers meanwhile were drawing up for a charge. The artillery on each side was in an incessant blaze, and one sheet of sparkling fire flashed from the small arms of both lines. Then the cavalry came dashing down, in dense column, their dress and arms glittering in the sun, seemingly in strange contrast with their work of death. All around was clamour and hurry, drowning the shouts of command, and groans of the dying. Davis gave the order to fire; a report from hundreds of the rifles rang along his line, and mangled heaps of the enemy sunk to the ground. Struck with dismay, the lacerated host heaved back, while in mad confusion, horse trod down horse, crushing wounded and dying beneath their hoofs in the reckless rushings of retreat. The day was once more saved.

At the same time, the Kentucky regiment, supported by Bragg's artillery, had driven back the enemy's infantry, and recovered a portion of the lost ground. The latter officer then moved his pieces to the main plateau, where, in company with Captain Sherman, he did much execution, particularly upon the masses that were in the rear. General Taylor placed all the regular cavalry and Captain Pike's squadron of horse under the orders of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel May, with directions to hold in check the enemy's column, still advancing to the rear along the base of the mountain. May posted himself north of the ravine, through which the enemy were moving towards Buena Vista, in order to charge them as they approached that



Death of Colonel Yell.

place. The enemy, however, still continued to advance, until almost the whole American artillery were playing upon them. At length, unable to stand the fearful slaughter, their ranks fell into confusion, some of the corps attempting to effect a retreat upon their main line of battle. To prevent this, the general ordered the 1st dragoons, under Lieutenant Rucker, to ascend the deep ravine, which these corps were endeavouring to cross, and disperse them. The squadron, however, were unable to accomplish their object, in consequence of a heavy fire from a battery covering the enemy's retreat.

Meanwhile, a large body of lancers assembled on the extreme left of the Americans, for the purpose of charging upon Buena Vista. To support that point, General Taylor ordered forward May, with two pieces of Sherman's battery. At the same time, the scattered forces at that hacienda were collected by Majors Munroe and Morrison, and uniting with some of the troops of the Indiana regiment, they were posted to defend the position. Before May could reach the village, the enemy had begun the attack. They were gallantly opposed by the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry, under Colonels Marshall and Yell. The shock was a heavy one. Colonel Yell fell at the head of his column, a lance entering his mouth, wrenching off his lower jaw, and shattering the side of his face. The Kentuckians lost Adjutant Vaughan, a young officer of much promise. The enemy's column was separated into two portions, one sweeping by the American depot under a destructive fire from the Indiana troops, until they gained the mountain opposite, the other portion regaining the base of the mountain to the west. Lieutenant-Colonel May now reached Buena Vista, and approaching the base of the mountain, held in check the enemy's right flank, upon whose masses, crowded in the narrow gorges and ravines, the artillery was doing fearful execution.

The position of that portion of the Mexican army which had gained the American rear, was now so critical, as to induce the belief that it would be forced to surrender. At the moment, however, when the artillery was thinning its ranks, and May, after much manœuvering, was about charging their flank, a white flag was observed approaching the American quarters, and General Taylor ordered the firing to cease. The message was simply a demand from General Santa Anna, requesting to know what the American general wanted. General Wool was sent to have a personal interview with the Mexican general. On reaching the Mexican lines, Wool was unable to stop the enemy's farther advance, and returned to head-quarters. The object of the Mexicans had, however, been accomplished—their extreme right moving along the base of the mountain, and joining the main army.

During the day, the cavalry of General Minon had ascended the elevated plain above Saltillo, occupying the road from the city to the field of battle, where they intercepted several men. On approaching the town, they were fired upon by Captain Webster from the redoubt occupied by his company, after which they moved off towards the eastern side of the valley, in the direction of Buena Vista. Captain Shover, with one piece, moved rapidly forward in pursuit, and being supported by a miscellaneous command of volunteers, he fired several shots at the enemy with great effect. After being closely pursued into the ravines which led to the lower valley, they made some attempts to charge the artillery, but were finally driven back in con fused mass, and did not again appear upon the plain.

The roar of artillery, which had lasted from before sunrise, now partially ceased on the principal field, the enemy apparently confining his efforts to the protection of his artillery. General Taylor had just left the main depot, when he was unexpectedly recalled by a heavy fire of musketry. On regaining his position, a stirring scene was presented. The Illinois and 2d Kentucky cavalry had been attacked in a rugged defile by an overwhelming force of both cavalry and infantry, and were now struggling alone against fearful odds. Could the enemy succeed in defeating these troops, they might renew the main attack with great advantage, and perhaps gain the day. To prevent the catastrophe, Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the left, was immediately ordered into battery. Feeling how important was every moment, that brave officer abandoned some of his heaviest carriages, and pushed forward with those that could move most rapidly. Gaining a point from which they could be used, he placed them in battery, and loaded with canister. His position was one of imminent peril. The supporting infantry had been routed, the advance artillery captured, and the enemy, flushed with victory, were throwing their masses towards him. He appealed to the commanding general for help. None was to be had; and nerving himself for his terrible duties, he returned to the battery, and spoke a few low, hurried words to his men.* Silently, but firmly they gathered round their pieces, and awaited orders. The commanding general sat on horseback, gazing with thrilling intensity upon that handful of troops. After all the losses and triumphs of the day, victory had eluded their grasp, to hang upon the approaching struggle.

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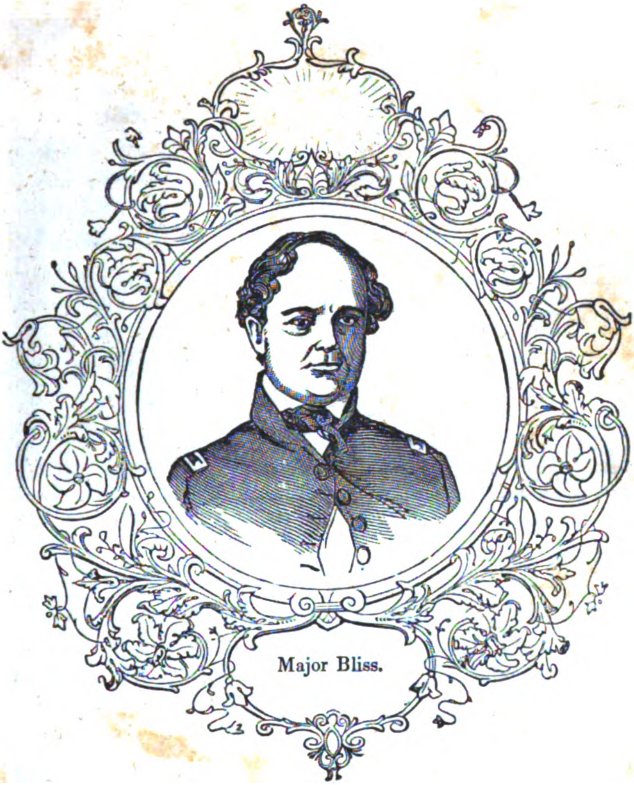
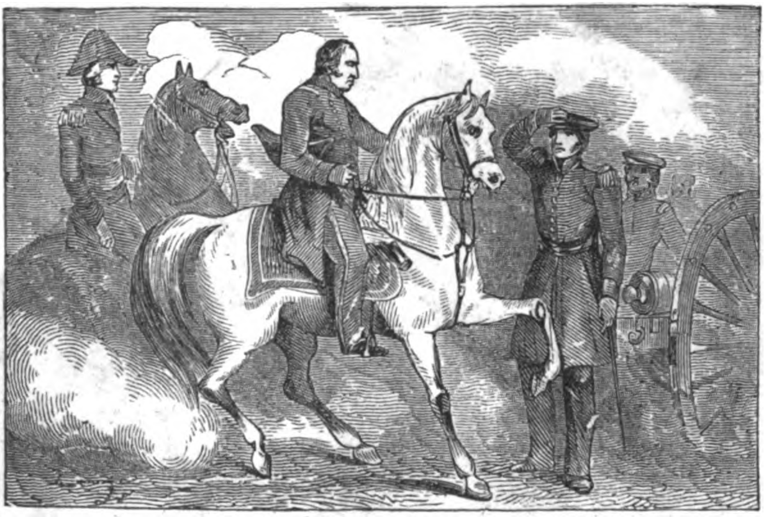
* In connection with this period of the battle, an anecdote is told, which, although we cannot vouch for its truth, is plausible, and highly characteristic. When Bragg applied to the general for reinforcements, the latter was sitting upon his horse, watching with deep solicitude the advance of the enemy's host. His reply to the request was—"I have no reinforcement to give, but Major Bliss and I will support you." Accordingly, "Major Bliss and I" put spurs to their horses, and were soon beside the cannon, where they remained until the Mexicans had retreated.



Major Bliss.

The cavalry were almost near enough to spring upon his guns, when Bragg gave the order to fire. Suddenly they halted, staggered a few paces, and then closed for the charge. The shouts of their supporting infantry followed the roar of artillery, and they again advanced. The cannoneers had marked the effect, with feelings too intense to admit of outward expression, and rapidly reloading, they again poured forth a shower of grape. The effect was fearful; and General Taylor, as he beheld the bleeding columns, felt that the day was his own. A third discharge completed the rout. Discipline gave way among the enemy to the confused flight of terrified hosts, as pouring through the rugged passes, they trod each other down in their hurried course. One wild shout went up from the American army, broken at short intervals by the thunder of Bragg's artillery.

This final repulse was not accomplished without a melancholy loss. It fell heaviest on the Kentuckians, of whom Colonels McKee and Clay were both killed. The former fell amid some rocks, pierced with a mortal wound, and was subsequently hacked and mutilated by



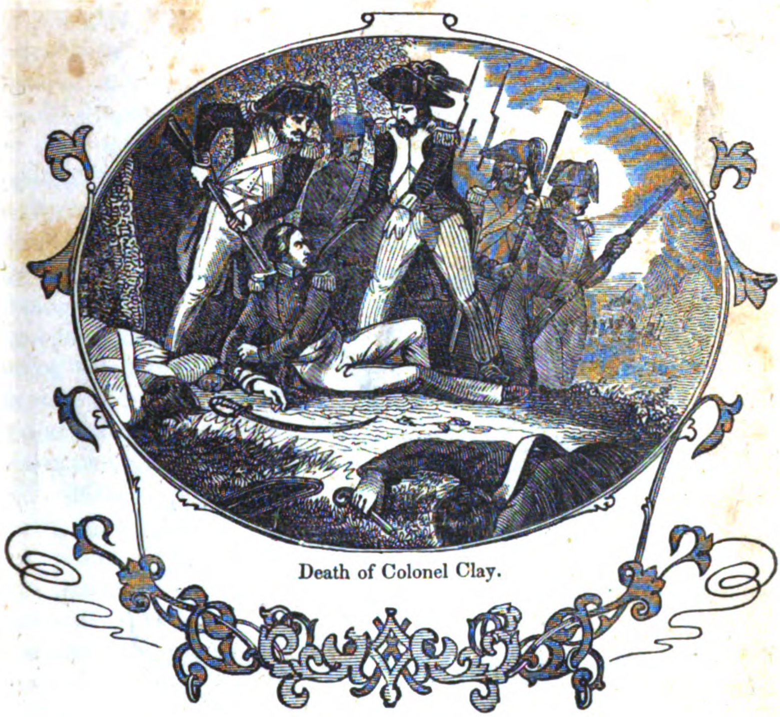
General Taylor and Captain Bragg at Buena Vista.

the enemy's bayonets. Lieutenant-Colonel Clay was wounded in the leg, and sat down near a rock. But his sorrowing followers rushed from their ranks, amid the enemy's fire, and bore him in their arms. Although the Mexicans pressed closely behind, the soldiers carried him until the road became so rugged that two could scarcely walk together. He then begged them to leave him and take care of themselves, which they were at length compelled to do. The Mexicans surrounded him, stabbing him with their bayonets, as he endeavoured to defend himself with his sword.

Colonel Hardin, the pride of the Illinois regiment, was killed in the same charge with Clay and McKee.

In the retreat of the enemy, a portion of the American infantry pursued them through a ravine so far that they got out of supporting distance. On seeing this, the Mexicans suddenly wheeled round and attacked them. The infantry were in their turn driven back, taking the course of another ravine, at the end of which a body of the enemy were waiting to intercept them. Fortunately, while the cavalry were pursuing, they came within range of Washington's battery, which, opening upon them with grape, drove back their column in confusion, and saved the exhausted fugitives.

This was the last struggle on the well-fought field of Buena Vista. For ten hours the battle had raged with unmitigated fury, and yet, strange to say, each army occupied the ground that it had early in the morning. As night crept among the rocky gorges, the wearied soldiers sunk down on their arms upon the field. Although the air

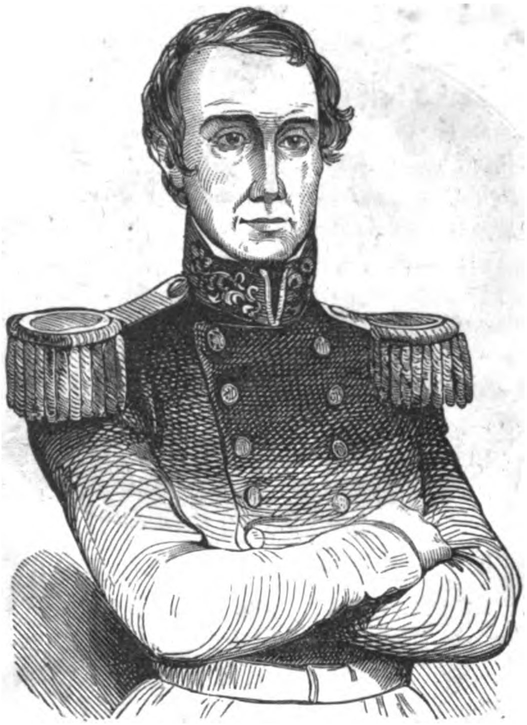


Death of Colonel Clay.

was excessively cold, the Americans slept without fires, expecting a renewal of the attack early on the following morning. The night was one of horror. On every rock, and in every defile, piles of dead and wounded lay, the latter writhing in torture, their wounds stiff and clotted with the chill air, while their piercing shrieks for aid, and supplications for water, made the night hideous. The whole medical staff were busy until morning, dressing wounds, amputating limbs, and removing the dead to Saltillo. The wolves and jackals stole from the caverns of the mountains, and howled in startling chorus, over the banquet prepared for them by man.

The wounded being all removed to Saltillo before morning, General Taylor made every preparation to receive the enemy on the following morning. Seven fresh companies were drawn from the town, and Brigadier-General Marshall, with a reinforcement of Kentucky cavalry, and four heavy guns, under Captain Prentiss, was ordered on duty.

That Santa Anna had determined to renew the attack on the 24th, there can be little doubt. The fearful condition of his troops, however, forbade the attempt, and before daylight he was in full retreat to Agua Nueva. The troops were starving, worn out with the toils



Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Clay, Jr.

of marching and fighting, and burning with thirst. Desertion, which had been prevented only by the hope of gaining the American camp, and by confidence in the ability of their general to carry it, now broke forth, when these restrictions were removed, with alarming violence, threatening in one night to disorganize the Mexican host.

The American force engaged in this battle, was four thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine men, of whom three hundred and forty-four were officers. This estimate is exclusive of the small command left in and around Saltillo. The entire regular force was only two squadrons of cavalry and three batteries of light artillery, in all not more than four hundred and fifty-three men. The strength of General Santa Anna, as stated by himself, was twenty thousand, a number which was even increased by accounts from prisoners. Besides these, General Minon had a large force near Saltillo. The whole force, then, of the Mexican army, may be safely stated at more than twenty-one thousand men.

The loss of the Americans was two hundred and sixty-seven killed, four hundred and fifty-six wounded, and twenty-three missing. Of the wounded, many did not require removal to the hospital, and a comparative small number were permanently disabled. General Santa Anna states his loss at fifteen hundred; but this was probably below the actual number. More than five hundred of his dead were left upon the battle-field. An able writer makes the following remarks on the American loss:—"The list of killed and wounded on the American side, is a mournful proof of the ferocity and violence which characterized this severe conflict, and a sad testimonial of the chivalry and fearlessness of the American soldiery. Sixty-five commissioned officers killed and wounded in so small an army, exhibits a proportion and result unparalleled in the history of war. Estimating General Taylor's force at five thousand rank and file, and allowing one commissioned officer to twenty men, the startling conclusion is arrived at, that our loss in this sanguinary engagement, of commissioned officers, amounted to one-fourth of the number in the field. If the loss of the rank and file were in like proportion to that of officers, it would exceed one thousand two hundred. In view of such terrible results as these, Santa Anna approached as near the truth, melancholy as it is, as he ever did, when he said that both armies were cut up. * * * * * * * The army of General Taylor may be considered as reduced at least one-third by casualties and by details to take care of the wounded."

Although on the morning of the 24th, Santa Anna had fallen back to Agua Nueva, yet the American general did not think it prudent to pursue him. The great disparity of numbers, and the exhaustion of the troops, might have rendered such a step extremely critical. A staff officer was despatched to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, which was satisfactorily accomplished on the following day. The dead were collected and buried, and a large number of Mexican wounded left upon the field, were removed to Saltillo, and rendered as comfortable as circumstances would permit.

On the morning of the 26th, the enemy's position was closely reconnoitered, and was found to be occupied only by a small body of cavalry, the infantry and artillery having retreated in the direction of San Luis Potosi. Accordingly, on the 27th, the American troops resumed their former camp at Agua Nueva, the enemy's rear guard evacuating the place as they approached, leaving a considerable body of wounded. General Taylor was anxious to examine and threaten their quarters at Encarnacion on the following morning; but the cavalry horses were too much exhausted to attempt so long a march without water. On the 1st of March, however, Colonel Belknap, with a small command, was sent against that place. He found there about sixty Mexican soldiers, and about two hundred wounded, their main army having passed on in the direction of Matahuela. Their numbers were much reduced, the men suffering greatly with hunger, while lying in the road, and crowding the buildings of the hacienda were the sick and disabled, the dead and dying, affording sad proof of the ravages of war.

On the 26th, General Taylor issued his congratulatory orders to the army, thanking officers and men for their good behaviour during the action. Similar orders were issued by the Mexican commander. On receiving news of the battle, the governor of San Luis Potosi published a proclamation, claiming it as a victory.

We have before adverted to the difficulty of describing the action at Buena Vista, arising from the complexity of its operations. A similar difficulty is experienced in forming an impartial and comprehensive opinion as to its actual merits. Throughout the whole day, the position of the American army was rather that of defending a fortified work, than of fighting a pitched battle; and in fact the ground was better adapted to defensive warfare than any fortification could have been, unless possessing strength of the first order. The configuration of the whole field was such, that all cavalry movements were nearly paralyzed, and even the masses of infantry were sometimes divided, and their movements deranged. The pass of Angostura, in which Washington's battery was placed, is one of the strongest in Mexico, and by a small party could be defended against almost any odds. The right wing of the army was also admirably situated, so as to rest its flanks on the western mountains on one side, and on impassable ravines on the other, while an enemy must approach over broken surfaces, exposed to full fire. The plateau forming the key of the American position, was so high as to command all the neighbouring ground, east and west, to the mountains, and could be reached only through intricate windings, formed by ledges of rocks. Through these the enemy moved to the attack; and if their charge was such as to rout one regiment, drive back another, and silence the artillery, we may judge of the effect which would have attended their operations upon a field like that of Palo Alto. The only occasion in which an open ground was presented to both parties was at the charge upon Buena Vista; but here, it will be remembered, the enemy's column had been lacerated by passing the ordeal of Bragg's artillery, May's supporting infantry, and other companies.

But while the candid historian is obliged to exhibit the difficulties against which Santa Anna contended, he must not be supposed to imply that they at all detracted from the courage of the American general in risking such a battle, or the conduct of his men in sustaining it. Only a handful of his little band had ever seen an action, the remainder being freshly levied troops, who, under any other than an American general, would have been employed with caution and distrust. Confiding in their valour, he intrusted to them the fate of the battle, the safety of his army, the security of previous conquests, and his personal popularity.

It was the commander's influence over their minds that wrought the soldiers to enthusiasm at sight of the enemy, and nerved each soul during the terrible encounter. The whole battle was a series of charges on the one hand, and cannonading on the other. It afforded an opportunity not only for each regiment of the Americans to bear the brunt of action, but also for each one to save the day. The artillery, in the language of the commanding general, did wonders. Had O'Brien not maintained his position as he did, confusion and rout would have ensued. The same would have followed a repulse of Captain Bragg or Captain Washington. But even after these officers had behaved as they did, the day would have been lost had either the Illinois regiment, the Mississippi, the Kentucky, or the 3d Indiana been routed. Each man, therefore, of those who maintained the whole battle did his duty; and to this unanimity of action, controlled as it was by confidence in their general, and supported by the laudable emulation between the volunteers from different states, we must refer the greater portion of success. The remainder is owing to the cordial co-operation of the officers of companies with their men, which continually exposed them to the greatest dangers, and was the cause of the large list of killed and wounded officers; to the remembrance of former triumphs; and lastly, in no little degree to the ardent ambition to defeat the greatest chief of Mexico.

Unfortunately for the Mexicans, they were not possessed of the same unanimity which marked the resistance of their antagonists. Their movement from the front of the American army along its left flank to the rear, was an admirable one, but several of their cavalry sections did not perform their evolutions in time, and thus mainly counteracted the effect. General Minon also failed to obey orders to attack the rear, a circumstance which perhaps saved the hacienda of Buena Vista.

In effect, this action was one of the most decisive of the whole war. Had victory declared in favour of Santa Anna, the American army would have been completely annihilated. The conduct of the Mexicans, in murdering the wounded on the field, and taking scarcely any prisoners, clearly evinces this.

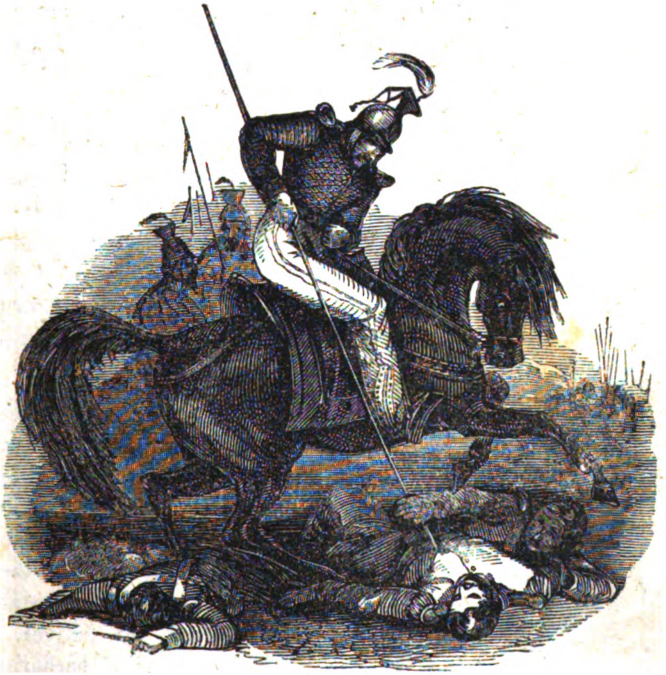
News of the battle was received, throughout the United States, with a burst of enthusiastic admiration, saddened only by the remembrance of the gallant spirits who had sacrificed themselves to win it.

Every demonstration of joy was exhibited in favour of the general and army, who had achieved such a triumph; and official bodies voted various testimonials of respect to the commander-in-chief.

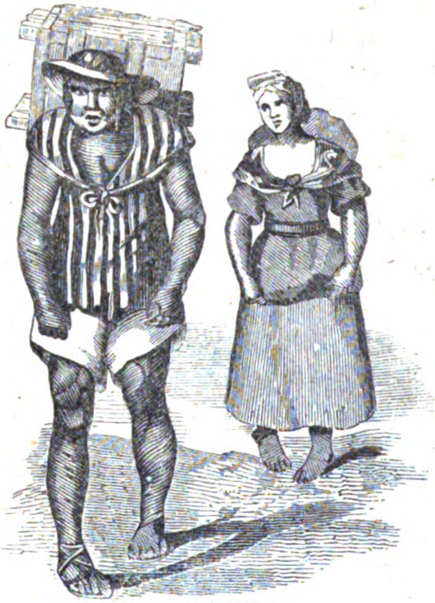
GENERAL TAYLOR despatched the news of this battle to Washington on the 2d of March, intrusting his papers to Mr. Crittenden of Kentucky. He was accompanied by an escort of two hundred and sixty troops, and one hundred and fifty wagons, under Major Giddings. On the 7th they were met, near Seralvo, by General Urrea, with about fifteen hundred Mexicans, who immediately commenced an attack. The lancers swept by the rear and flank of the Americans, hoping to throw them into confusion; but the artillery and musketry being brought to bear upon them, they retired with some loss. While this was going on, a number of team-drivers, becoming frightened, deserted their wagons, forty of which were captured by the enemy and burned. One of these, being an ammunition wagon, exploded, killing and wounding ten Mexicans, and causing a number to run away. The train of wagons being now broken, the enemy placed themselves between the rear guard and main body, so as to capture an infantry company, and a piece of artillery, forming the rear. The major ordered Captain Bradly to open a communication between the two portions; but, while he was preparing to do so, Captain Kneally, who had commanded the rear, arrived, and informed Giddings that his party was surrounded, and had received a demand for a surrender, and also that he had had an interview with Langberg, commander of the party that had assailed him. One hour had been allowed to make up his mind. Major Giddings immediately requested of the Mexican officer that the truce might terminate, and instructed Captain Bradly to cut his way through to the rear. This was gallantly executed by that officer, who drove away the masses on each side of his course, reached Kneally's party, and saved the remainder of the wagons. Some skirmishing ensued, which lasted until evening, when the lancers withdrew to Seralvo. A party of the enemy were afterwards driven from some springs in the neighbourhood, and before morning their whole force left the town. The Americans entered it on the 8th.

In this affair, Major Giddings lost two privates, both of Bradley's company, and fifteen teamsters; the Americans had forty-five killed and wounded.

A few days after this battle, Colonel Curtis reached Seralvo, on his road to Monterey. He had with him a strong force, and was in pursuit of Urrea. Continuing his pursuit, he came up with General Taylor on the 18th, at Marin. The general had with him May's dragoons, and two companies of Bragg's artillery, with which he had left Agua Nueva to pursue Urrea. But, although the chase was vigorously maintained until the latter end of March, Urrea managed to elude his formidable pursuers, and retreated beyond the mountains. The American general retired to Walnut Springs.



Mexicans killing the Wounded at Buena Vista.



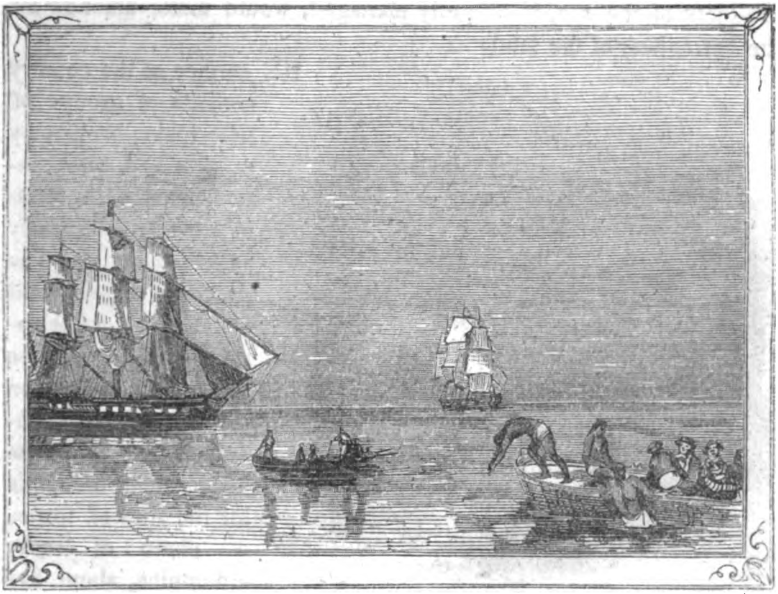
Mexican Indians.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONQUEST OF CALIFORIA AND NEW MEXICO.

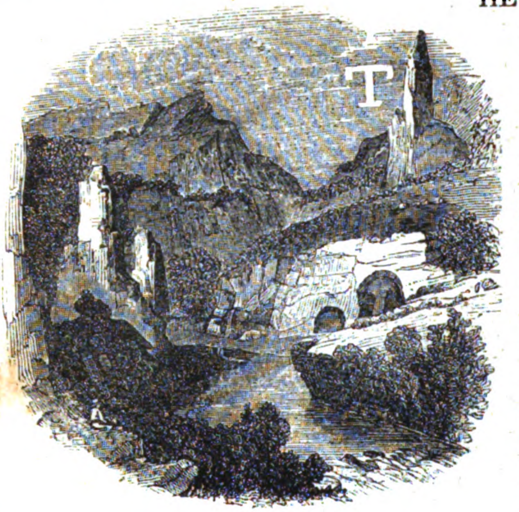
CALIFORNIA, though a part of the republic of Mexico, has always been isolated from it, forming a distinct country, with nothing common to it and Mexico, except that the inhabitants are of the same race.

Grijalva, as we have before noticed, discovered Lower California in 1534, and towards the close of the succeeding century, the Jesuits established themselves in it to convert the natives. They found them in the rudest state of barbarism, but weak and indolent, living by hunting, fishing, and the spontaneous produce of the soil. The efforts of the missionaries have nominally converted about half the natives to Christianity, but the numbers of the native inhabitants are rapidly decreasing, and the population of the country does not number much more than fifteen



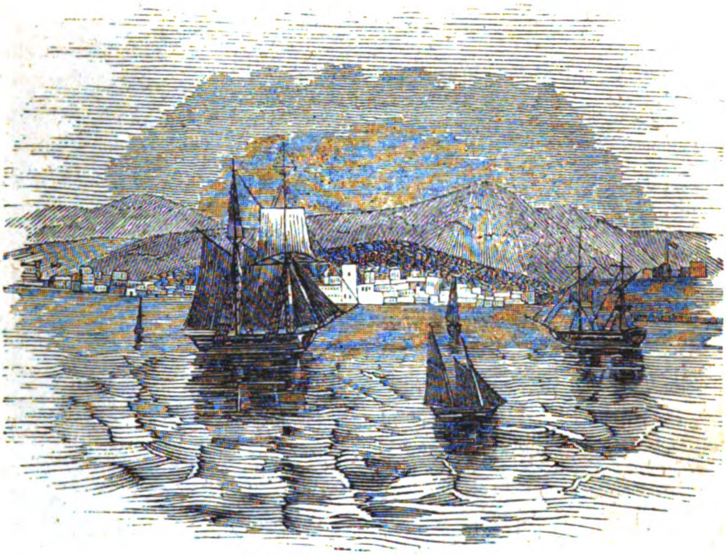
Pearl Divers.

thousand. The peninsula of Lower California is about seven hundred miles in length, and ranges from thirty to one hundred in breadth, giving altogether an area of some thirty-eight thousand square miles. It has argentiferous lead ores, and some mines of gold and silver, but these have been neglected, perhaps on account of the greater inducements to adventurers to embark in the pearl fishery. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, large quantities of pearls were obtained by the Spaniards, whose cruelty to the natives brought about the interference of the Jesuits, and the fisheries have since steadily declined. The divers are brought in vessels from the opposite coast of the Californian gulf. The last authentic account of an expedition thither gave the number of vessels at four, with one hundred and eighty divers, and the results at about twelve thousand dollars. In the seventeenth century, when vessels rating fifty tons were employed, the royal fifth usually produced about twelve thousand dollars for every vessel employed. At present the proceeds of the expedition are shared out after this manner. The largest oysters are laid aside for the Virgin, and the remainder are counted out in the proportion of eight for the divers, eight for the owners, and two for the government. The greatest advantage is probably derived by the traders on shore, who supply the divers with spirits, chocolate, sugar, tobacco, and necessaries. Sixteen or eighteen little vessels are annually employed in the gulf, yielding about a thousand dollars each. The products of the sea, if properly managed, would make amends for the barrenness of the land.



THE surface of the country consists of groups of bare rocks, broken by ravines and hills, interspersed with tracts of a sandy soil, nearly as unproductive. The sheltered valleys yield maize and a great variety of fruits. There are some harbours on the coast, but the indifferent soil near them makes them ineligible for the sites of towns. A chain of rocky mountains, about five thousand feet high, runs through the peninsula, from south-east to north-west, into Upper California, where it divides into several ranges, diverging as they advance north.

The part of Upper California, inhabited by foreign settlers, is chiefly a tract extending five hundred miles along the shore of the Pacific, and bounded inland at an average distance of forty miles from the coast by a range of hills. The most southern portion of this region is torrid and parched, like the climate and soil of Lower California, but as we proceed north, the climate becomes more favourable, though the country is subject to long and severe droughts, which occasion great distress. There are many streams in this part of California, which carry off the water in torrents to the ocean, during the rainy season, and cause the valleys which they water to afford good pasturage for cattle, which are found there in large numbers. There are but two tracts of country capable of supporting a large population, one west of Mount San Barnardin, about the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, and the other surrounding the Bay of San Francisco, and the lower part of the Sacramento. Nearly all the establishments made by the Spaniards in the country, prior to the revolution, have declined with the fall of the power that upheld them, but the commerce which has been since that period, commenced and maintained by the Americans, has increased the population and resources of the towns. The first settlement established by the Spaniards is San Diego, now a town of three hundred inhabitants, about a mile from



San Francisco, California.

the north shore of a bay, which communicates with the ocean, in the latitude of thirty-two degrees, forty-one minutes, and which runs ten miles inland, affording entrance to vessels of any size, and a safe anchorage from all winds. The passage leading into it is defended by fortifications, which if properly manned and armed, would render the town secure from all naval attacks.*

San Juan is a small place on an unsafe harbour, sixty miles north-west from San Diego. San Pedro is not far distant from San Juan, in the same direction, on a bay sheltered from the north-west winds, but exposed to those from the south-west. The country near these places is sandy and barren; but at a short distance inland, in a north-easterly direction, is the fertile tract above mentioned, as lying near Mount San Barnardin. Wherever this part is properly irrigated it produces wheat, vines, olives, and a variety of fruits. In its midst, thirty miles north from San Pedro, is the largest town in California, San Pueblo de los Angelos, containing one thousand inhabitants. Near it is the mission of San Gabriel, the vineyards in the vicinity of which formerly supplied the missionaries with good wine.

A hundred miles westward of San Pedro is Cape Conception, greatly dreaded on account of the frequent and violent storms encountered in its vicinity. Opposite to this cape are the eight islands

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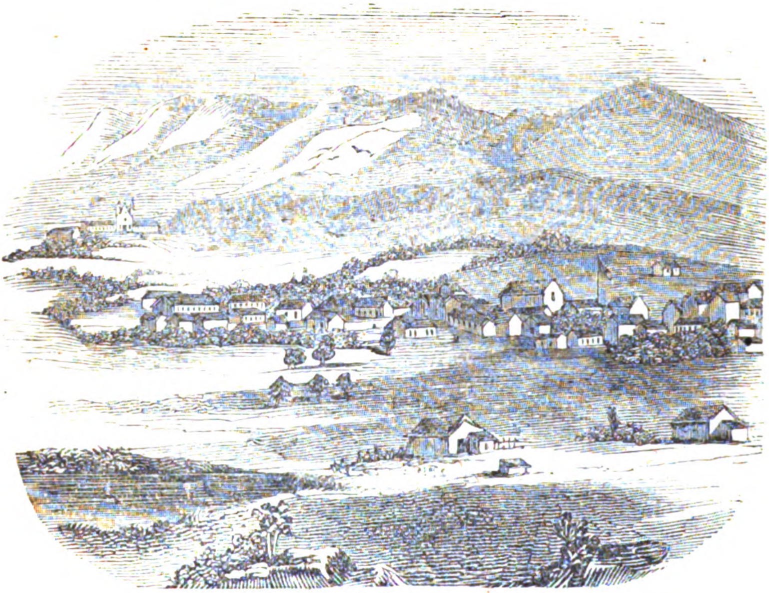
* Greenhow.



Santa Barbara.

of Santa Barbara, four of which are barren rocks, and the others, Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa, Santa Catilina, and San Clemente, contain from fifteen to twenty square miles. The channel of Santa Barbara separates the island of Santa Cruz from the main land, on which are situated the town, fort, and mission of Santa Barbara. The harbour is an open roadstead, sheltered only from the north and west winds of winter, and consequently unsafe in the hot months, on account of the violent hurricanes and storms from the south-west, which then prevail. A sandy plain stretches from the town to the Santa Barbara range of mountains. These end a hundred miles north of Cape Conception, in a point called the Punta de Pinos, or Cape of Pines, between which and the Punta de Nuevo Ano, Cape New Year, twenty-four miles north, is the bay of Monterey. This is an almost semicircular indentation of the coast, on the southernmost part of which stands San Carlos de Monterey, the seat of government of California. The harbour is very good, though but an open roadstead; the castle and the fort are mud walls, never well manned, and the town itself boasts but a small number of mud-built houses. The mission is in a valley three miles south of the town, but its buildings are dilapidated and nearly deserted. But little is produced from the soil in the neighbourhood, although it would be fertile if properly cultivated.*

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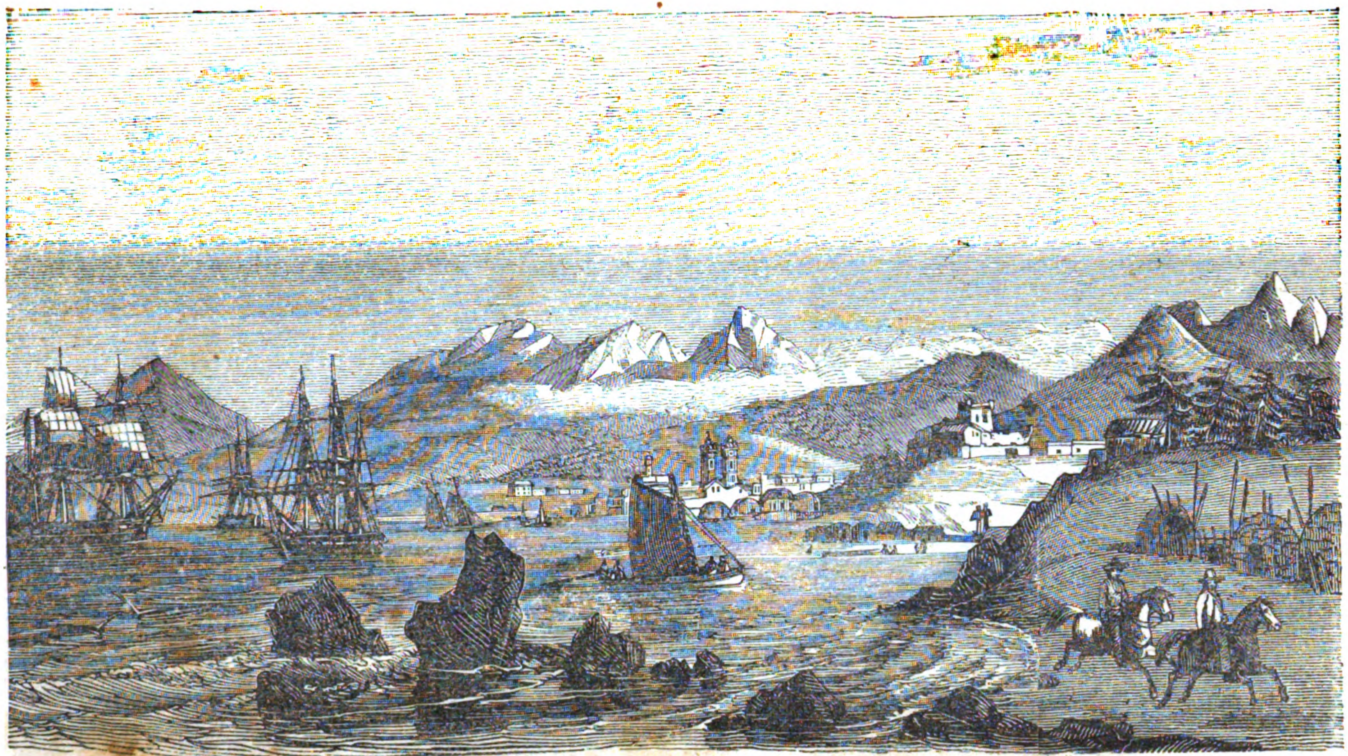
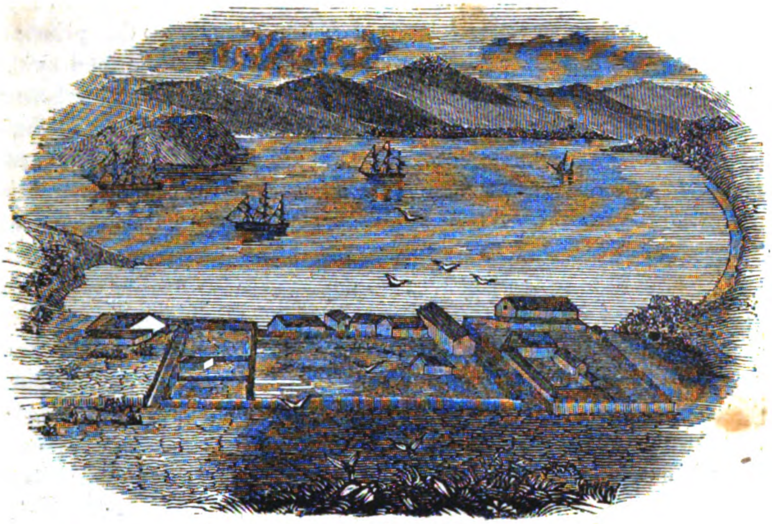
* Greenhow



San Carlos de Monterey.



Anchorage at Yerba Buena.

North of the bay of Monterey is the mission of Santa Cruz, a resort of the vessels in the Pacific for water and provisions, and farther in the interior is the town of Branciforte. Still farther north is a bold promontory called Punta de los Reyes, the Cape of Kings, immediately south-east of which is the bay of San Francisco, which contains, among the high hills surrounding it, some of the most beautiful, convenient, and secure harbours in the world. The southern branch of the bay extends thirty miles south-eastward, into a delightful country, watered by streams from the hills and the lakes of Tule. The northern branch is contracted into two passages, forming between them a basin called the bay of San Pablo, which connects by the strait of Carquines with another basin, containing many islands, into which empty the Sacramento, and some smaller streams. The Sacramento has a very tortuous course, three hundred miles in length, one hundred of which are navigable from its mouth. The country watered by this river is well adapted for the support of a numerous population, and the settlements in its vicinity have advanced more rapidly than those of any other part of California. At the southern extremity of the bay are the mission of Santa Clara and the town of San Jose, on the north the missions of San Rafael and San Francisco Solana. All of these obtain from the soil near them, grains, fruits, and pasturage for large herds of cattle. Near the south side of the passage connecting the bay with the ocean at the termination of the San Buno mountains, are the town, mission, and fort of San Francisco. A cove some miles south of the entrance passage, between the western shore of the bay and the island of Yerba Buena, is the principal anchorage for vessels, and here a settlement has been formed by the Americans and English, which takes its name from that of the island. Of this place, now chiefly held by recent American settlers, whose presence caused the immediate appearance of the great American means of civilization, the newspaper press, the California Star speaks as follows: "The site of the town is handsome and commanding, being an inclined plane of about a mile in extent, from the water's edge to the hills in the rear. Two points of land, one on each side, extending into the bay, form a crescent, or a small bay in the shape of a crescent, in front, which bears the name of the town. These points afford a fine view of the surrounding country; the snow-capped mountains in the distance; the green valleys beneath them; the beautiful, smooth, and unruffled bay in front and on either side, at once burst upon the eye. There is, in front of the town, a small island, rising high above the surface of the bay, about two miles long and one wide, which is covered the greater part of the year with the most exuberant herbage, of untrodden freshness. This little island is about three miles from the shore. Between it and the town is the principal anchorage. Here the vessels of all nations rest in safety and peace, and their flags are displayed by the aromatic breeze. Two hundred yards from the shore there is twenty-four feet water, and a short distance beyond that as many fathoms.

THE climate is here, in the winter, which is the rainy season, damp and chilly. During the rest of the year, it is dry, but chiefly in consequence of the continual strong winds from north and north-west. There is but little variation in the atmosphere throughout the year; the thermometer ranging from fifty-five to seventy degrees. Yerba Buena is one of the most healthy places on the whole coast of the Pacific. Sickness of any kind is rarely known there. The salubrity of the climate—beauty of the site of the town—its contiguity to the mouth of the bay—the finest harbour on the whole coast in front—the rich and beautiful country around it, all conspire to render Yerba Buena one of the best commercial points in the world.

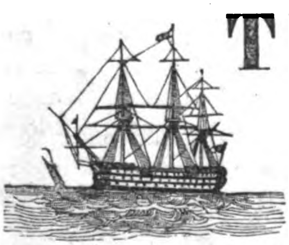
North of Cape de los Reyes, are two small settlements, which were begun by the Russians, for the purpose of supplying their more northern possessions with beef and grain; but their relations with the Spaniards and Mexicans were always unfriendly, and they sold out their establishments to American adventurers.

The interior of California is little known. It has been frequently traversed by the Catholic priest, and the American trader, but one was absorbed in his spiritual warfare and the other in trade, and neither have given authentic accounts of the face of the country.

The more northern portion is a wilderness of lofty mountains, the southern is a desert of sandy plains and rocky hills, and lakes, and marshes having no outlet. There is little probability of any portion of this region being inhabited, except that in the vicinity of the Colorado river, which rises near the forty-first degree of north latitude, among the Rocky mountains, and flows south-westward, receiving other streams, until it reaches the Gulf of California. All the explorers who have visited California describe it as a magnificent country.

THE variety of the surface, the soil, rich loam, the thick and abundant forests, the immense pastures, and the arrangement of the mountains tending to preserve a perpetual spring, have all conspired to lure thither the adventurous spirits of America; and there can be no doubt that the country, remote as it is, will be filled up much more rapidly than equally good districts not possessed of the enchantment of distance. Mr. Forbes, who was for several years, the consul of Great Britain, in one of the Mexican ports on the Pacific, speaks in the highest terms of the country, and gives tabular proofs of the accuracy of his statements. Vancouver was struck with the quantity and variety of the productions of the country round the mission of Buena Ventura, appertaining to the temperate as well as to the torrid zone; such as apples, pears, plums, figs, oranges, grapes, pomegranates, plantains, bananas, cocoanuts, sugarcane, indigo, and every useful variety of kitchen plants, and medicinal roots. And Mr. Forbes adds, that it would not be easy to match such an assemblage as this elsewhere, and yet this is only a part of the fruits and vegetables now cultivated in California. In his work he speaks with favour of a project not at all agreeable to our feelings as Americans. This is the cancelling of a debt owed to England by a transfer of the Californias to her creditors. It would be a wise measure on the part of Mexico, he says, if the government could be brought to lay aside the vanity of retaining large possessions. The cession of such a disjointed part of the republic as California, would be an advantage. In no case can it ever be profitable to the Mexican republic, nor can it possibly remain united to it for any length of time. Therefore giving up this territory would be getting rid of this last for nothing.

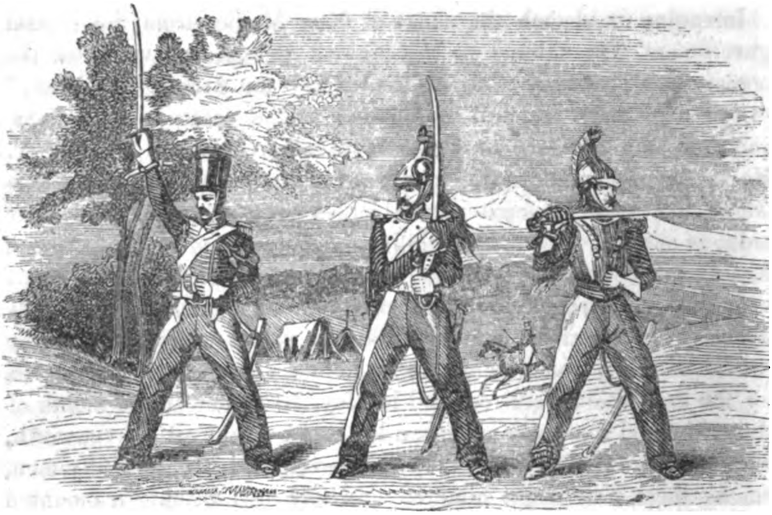
The difficulty having arisen in the mind of the statesmanlike author as to how it should be held, he concludes that if California were ceded for the English debt, the creditors might be formed into a company, having a sort of sovereignty over the territory—somewhat in the manner of the East India Company. This, in his opinion, would certainly bring a revenue in time, which might be equal to the debt; and, under good management, and with an English population, would most certainly realize all that has been predicted of this fine country. The promptitude of Commodore Jones, the romantic bravery and gallant daring of Colonel Fremont, the chivalry of Commodore Stockton, and the abilities of General Kearny, added to the far-sighted policy of the statesmen of America, have reserved for the citizens of the United States the right of realizing these predictions, and saved to the British consul-statesman any further anxiety as to how California may be held.



THE value and advantageous position of that country is known and appreciated no less in America than in England; and the rulers of the Three Kingdoms have once more been shown that there exists in America a power capable and willing to put a check upon that monopolizing ambition which would encircle the globe with a network of colonial strong holds, from which to harass and annoy every other nation in times of war; and in peace and in war to pour out the tributary wealth of all the world at the foot of the throne of Great Britain. California is in the hands of the American people, who are beginning rapidly to emigrate thither. Their commercial interests with the Hawaiian Islands and with Asia, will immediately become important; and a frequent intercourse with America, will commence the process of the social and political emancipation of the enslaved millions of Asia.

Intending to detach the states of New Mexico from the central government, the cabinet at Washington determined to order the organization of a body of troops known as "the Army of the West," to march to Santa Fe, and taking that as the centre of operations subjugate the northern provinces of Mexico. Colonel Stephen W. Kearny was appointed to the command of this corps, which was afterwards increased in force as the duties assigned it became more arduous and extensive. The ability and kindness of heart of Colonel Kearny made him very popular in the West, where the inhabitants so instinctively recognize and encourage military talent, and his only difficulty in mustering the forces called for was in selecting those who should be taken from among the numerous volunteers. The orders for the expedition were received in May, 1846, and in the month of June, Colonel Kearny commenced his march from Fort Leavenworth, with a body of about one thousand seven hundred and fifty men, among them were eight hundred and fifty men forming a mounted regiment, under Colonel Doniphan, two companies of infantry, under Captains Angney and Murphy, five companies of the first regiment United States dragoons, a battalion of flying artillery, under Major Clark, composed of two companies from St. Louis, under Captains Fischer and Weightman, and a company of dragoons, under Captain Hudson called the Laclede Rangers.

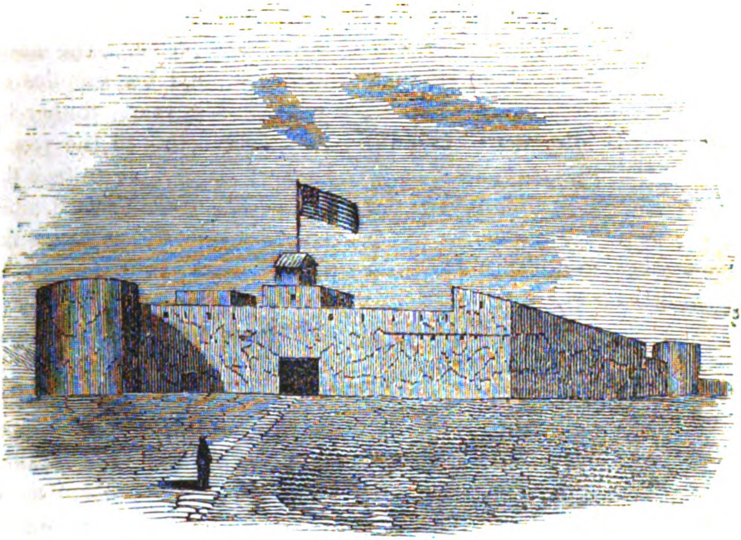
THE officers of the volunteer companies were some of them graduates from West Point, not in the regular service, and all men worthy of the esteem and confidence reposed in them by their men. While they were perfecting the discipline of the army, General Kearny had collected ordnance, subsistence, a thousand mules for draught, ordnance horses, wagons, baggage trains, and other stores. Lieutenants Emory, Warner, Abert, and Peck, of the United States topographical engineers, hastened to join the expedition, and the whole army set out on the march with an eagerness not a little heightened by the rumour that Governor Armijo was in arms at the head of four thousand Mexicans, about a hundred miles from Santa Fe, ready to intercept their march to that place.



Dragoons Exercising.

They moved on rapidly to Bent's Fort, a trading post for the Indians, named after its owners, who have merely erected a square of mud houses, with a stockade round it. The march was attended with difficulties appalling to the hearts of any other than the daring spirits of the West. For days together they would be employed in crossing immense plains, presenting a flat surface to the eye, producing in some places only short, poor grass, in others a rank luxuriance, but for miles neither bush nor tree.

At times the rain fell in torrents, beating through the tents, and soaking into the blankets of the poor soldiers, who lay upon the muddy ground in the utmost discomfort. Again the very grass of the prairies would seem to engender myriads of gnats, who would put men and horses to the greatest torment, penetrating their ears, eyes, and nostrils. Gusts of hot wind, compared by the sufferers to blasts from a furnace, came upon them. On the southern bank of the Arkansas were to be found only large sand-hills, entirely destitute of vegetation, the barrenness of which disappointed the troops the more because the rays of the sun playing upon their pointed tops, gave to them at a distance the appearance of large cities, in which gilded domes of churches, and the roofs of houses seemed plainly distinguishable. Herds of buffaloes roamed over the country, and packs of Mexican gray wolves followed the camp, attracted from a great distance by their high powers of scent, to feed upon the offal of the cattle slain for food, or the carcass of a dead horse. Their howling kept the poor soldiers awake at nights, while rattlesnakes would not unfre-



Bent's Fort.

quently come, attracted by the warmth of his body, to share his bed. After leaving Bent's Fort, the grass and water became very scarce, and the prudence of Kearny caused him to put the army upon a rather short allowance of food. Some merrily congratulated their fellows upon the kindness of their leader, who thus preserved them from the well-known bad consequences of a full habit in case they should be wounded in battle.

Colonel Kearny had some time before received a letter of instructions from the war department, in which he was informed that the president considered it of the greatest importance to get possession of Upper California, and that the expedition under his command was expected to effect it. An additional force of one thousand mounted men had been called for, which was to follow him in the direction of Santa Fe, and be under the orders of himself, or whomsoever he should leave in command there. When he had got possession of Santa Fe, if a small force would be sufficient to garrison it, he was to press forward to California. The great body of Mormon emigrants on the way to California was mentioned, and the propriety of establishing a good understanding with them pointed out. If they could be induced to raise a battalion of volunteers among their company, Colonel Kearny was instructed to muster them into the service of the United States, to be paid as other volunteers, that they might aid him in taking and holding possession of California. If the

American citizens he should find in California were willing to embody themselves as soldiers, for the same end, he was authorized to receive them also into the service of the United States. The naval force in the Pacific would co-operate with him, and his supplies of ordnance, ammunition, and stores, would be sent round thither by sea. He was directed to establish civil governments in the places he should capture, in both New Mexico and California; to take the oath of the officers of government to yield allegiance to the United States; to reduce the duties at the custom-houses; and to assure the people every where that it was the intention of the United States to provide for them a free government, similar to that which existed in the territories, when they would be called upon as freemen to exercise the right of electing representatives to their territorial legislature.

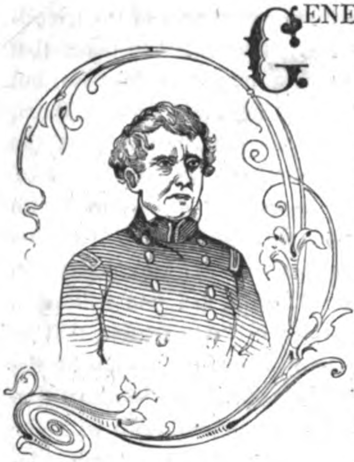
THE inhabitants were to be conciliated, and made as friendly as possible to the United States, and the trade between the western states and the Mexican provinces was to be encouraged. In concluding this despatch, Colonel Kearny was informed that he would receive a commission as brevet brigadier-general as soon as he commenced his march to California. So admirable was the discipline of General Kearny, and the spirit of his men, that the two infantry companies arrived at Bent's Fort in advance of the mounted men, and the different companies marched into that place at the very hour set by the general for each, and the whole army on the day he had appointed. The march was commenced at Fort Leavenworth on the 30th of June, 1846, and Bent's Fort, at a distance of five hundred and sixty-four miles, was reached on the 30th of July. The distance from Bent's Fort to Santa Fe is three hundred and nine miles. While the troops rested for a day or two, previous to setting out for Santa Fe, a Mexican or two strayed into the encampment, sent by Armijo as spies to discover the number and resources of the army. General Kearny had them marched around about and through the camp, over and over again, showing them every thing, and giving them exaggerated ideas of the force of the army, when he dismissed them, with the message that he would see Armijo in a few days. On the 31st of July, General Kearny issued a proclamation to the inhabitants of New Mexico, in conformity with the tenor of his instructions. At Bent's Fort he also had a talk with the Chyennes Indians.

ON the 3d of August, he pushed forward, and in ten days, during which the army suffered severely from sandy soil, bad grass, bad water, and insupportably hot winds, they began to ascend the first or Ratone chain of the Rocky mountains. The advance repeatedly captured scouts from the enemy's forces, who would, when discovered, summon the Americans to surrender, and then lay down their own arms. Their weapons being taken from them, they were rearmed with proclamations and sent forth to the villages of their countrymen. Many of them made a very respectable appearance; but they saw for themselves that they had little to hope from an encounter with an army composed of such *materiel* as General Kearny's, and when the kind treatment and frank deportment of the general had added affection to their reverence, they were permitted to depart to counsel their countrymen against opposition to a chieftain who would treat those as friends who did not molest him, while he had a force sufficiently large to put down all opposition. On the 15th of August, the army passed through the Lower Moro village. The town consisted of a miserable collection of houses or huts, built half under ground, and consisting of a single room roofed with logs. From the top of one of these, General Kearny made a speech to the people, during which, he made the alcaldes swear allegiance to the United States, and hailed the people as citizens of that country. They shouted their satisfaction, which was made real joy by an exemplification of the justice of General Kearny, such as they would not have experienced in a century, under Mexican governors. Notwithstanding his strict orders to the contrary, some of the animals of the army got into the fields near the town, and did some little damage to the standing crop of corn and wheat. General Kearny summoned the alcalde, informed him of the circumstance, directed him to examine the fields, ascertain what the damage was to each man, and send a statement of it to Santa Fe, where they would be fully compensated. The intelligence of this incident doubtless spread through the surrounding region rapidly, as when General Kearny "naturalized" the people of the next villages, as he had done those of the Lower Moro, they displayed very great enthusiasm, and brought forward their wives to exchange congratulations with the general.

Captain Cooke had been sent forward to Santa Fe to communicate with Governor Armijo, and he now returned with the information that that functionary would oppose the invasion with an army. Anticipating an attack in every mountain pass, General Kearny exercised the troops at each one, always getting his army through with a celerity that would have utterly disconcerted an enemy, had there been one at hand.

ON the 16th of August, the army came to San Miguel, a village built like the others of sunburnt bricks, with flat roofs. We extract from Lieutenant Emory's Journal, the following account of the proceedings at this place. "After much delay, the alcalde and the padre were found, and presented to General Kearny. They received him politely, but it was evident that they did not relish an interview with him. This village contains a respectable church, and about two or three hundred houses. The general expressed a wish to ascend one of the houses, with the priests and alcalde, and to address the people of the town, informing them of the object of his mission. After many evasions, delays, and useless speeches, the padre made a speech, stating that 'he was a Mexican, but should obey the laws that were placed over him for *the time*, but if the general should point all his cannon at his breast, he could not consent to go up there and address the people.' The general very mildly told him, through the interpreter, Mr. Robideau, that he had not come to injure him, nor did he wish him to address the people. He only wished him to go up there and hear him (the general) address them. The padre still fought shy, and commenced a long speech, which the general interrupted, and told him he had no time to listen to useless remarks, and repeated that he only wanted him to go up and listen to his speech. He consented. The general made pretty much the same remarks to the alcalde and the people that he had made to the people of the other villages. He assured them that he had an ample force and would have possession of the country against all opposition, but gave them assurances of the friendship and protection of the United States. He stated to them that this had never been given them by the government of Mexico, but that the United States were able and would certainly protect them, not only in their persons, property, and religion, but against the cruel invasions of the Indians. That they saw but a small part of the force that was at his disposal. Many more troops were near him on another road, (some of which he showed them a mile or two distant,) and another army would probably pass through their village in three weeks. After this he said, 'Mr. Alcalde, are you willing to take the oath of allegiance to the United States?' He replied that he would prefer waiting till the general had taken possession of the capital. The general told him, it was sufficient for him to know that he had possession of his village. He then consented, and with the usual formalities he said: 'You swear that you will bear true allegiance to the United States of America.' The alcalde said, 'provided I can be protected in my religion.' General Kearny said, 'I swear you shall be.' He then continued; 'and that you will defend her against all her enemies and opposers, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Amen.' The general then said, 'I continue you as the alcalde of this village; and require you, the inhabitants of this village, to obey him as such. Your laws will be continued for the present,—but as soon as I have time to examine them, if any change can be made that will be for your benefit, it shall be done.' After shaking hands with them, he left. The padre then invited him to his house, and gave him and his staff refreshments; and after sundry hugs, jokes, and professions of friendships, with an expression from the general, that the 'better they became acquainted, the better friends they would be,' and an invitation to the padre to visit him at Santa Fe, (which he promised,) we left the village. The padre was evidently the ruling spirit of the village, and the alcalde was under great restraint by his presence. The visit to the priest, and the frank and friendly manner of the general had the desired effect,—and I believe they parted the best of friends, and have no doubt that the inhabitants of San Miguel will soon be as good democrats as can be found in Missouri."

This is but one among many specimens of the humane and conciliating spirit which has generally actuated the officers of the United States in the prosecution of the recent war with Mexico. The contrast afforded by the affability, magnanimity, and justice of our officers to the arrogance and oppression of their own rulers could not fail to produce a great effect. It acted forcibly upon a people whose sensibility to moral influences is by no means remarkable.



GENERAL KEARNY, on leaving this village, learned that Armijo had sent General Salazar to command the troops that were to oppose the Americans, saying that he would remain himself to defend the town. On the next day the son of Salazar was taken prisoner. He gave information of the departure of the Mexican army for their homes. He was detained as a prisoner, and the march continued with the same caution as before. Americans came from Santa Fe, reporting that Armijo had fled from that place towards Chihuahua, taking with him a hundred dragoons and his cannon. On the 18th of August, the army came to the cañon, where a few days before three thousand Mexicans were assembled. But as the Americans approached they began to run away, and when they passed through, not an enemy was to be found. Notice was sent by General Kearny to Salazar, that his son would be held as a hostage for his behaviour, and that any disturbance on his own part would prove fatal to his offspring. The army marched into the public square of Santa Fe, and were received by the acting governor and other dignitaries, to whom General Kearny gave assurances of safety and protection to all quiet citizens. Meanwhile Major Swords hoisted the stars and stripes on the flag-staff of the palace, and Captains Fischer and Weightman hailed it with a salute from their batteries. The first gun was fired at the moment the general was proclaiming the conquest of New Mexico. "There," said he, "my guns proclaim that the flag of the United States floats over this capital." The people made no objection. The general was mild and courteous in explaining his intentions to the populace, but gave them to understand that he would use the force at his disposal, if necessary. He would close his harangues after this manner, "I claim the whole of New Mexico for the United States. I put my hand on it from this moment, (bringing his hand firmly down on his thigh,) and demand obedience to its laws."* The people of Santa Fe were absolved from their allegiance to Mexico, General Kearny proclaimed himself governor of the province, and claimed the inhabitants as citizens of the United States. He had the address to quiet their fears and win their respect, and

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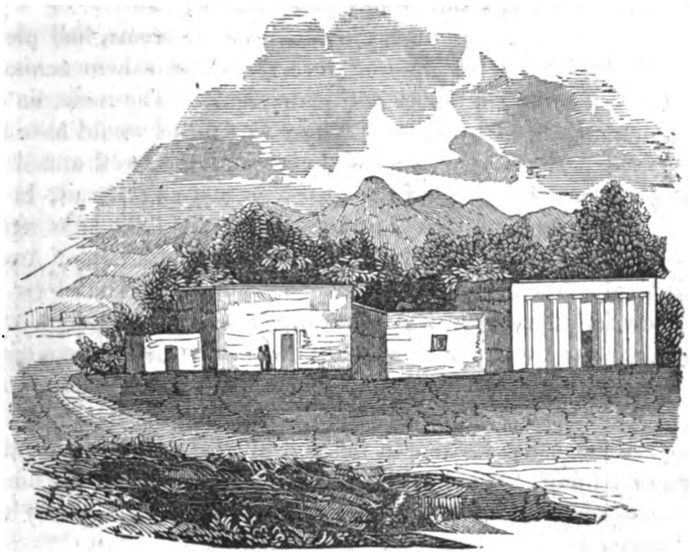
* Lieutenant Emory's Journal.



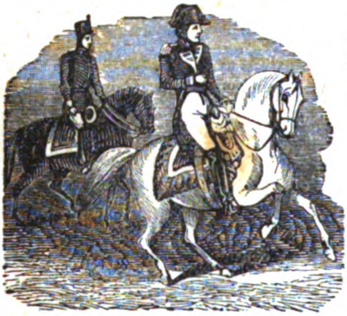
Santa Fe, New Mexico.

they replied to the addresses delivered, when the alcalde took the oath of allegiance to the United States, with the cries of "long live the general." Captain Fischer retook the cannon carried off by Armijo in his flight. The gun taken from the Texans, of the famous Santa Fe expedition, had its carriage destroyed, and was hidden in the mountain, but the Americans dug it up and brought it into camp. It is a six-pounder, bearing the "lone star" of Texas, and the name of her ex-governor, M. B. Lamar. The Americans adopted it as a favourite, and used it in firing their morning and evening signals.

Had Governor Armijo been half as courageous as he is known to be cruel, the army of General Kearny would probably have failed to reach Santa Fe. F. S. Edwards, Esq., one of the many intelligent gentlemen who displayed their patriotism by serving in the ranks on this arduous expedition, says, in his narrative of the campaign,—"The day on which we reached Santa Fe, we passed through the narrow defile in which we were to have been resisted. On seeing the great advantages we should have had to fight against, we could only look at each other with a stare expressive of, 'we are well out of it.' The cañon, or valley, in which the enemy were to have met us, winds between high mountains for miles, and then, after passing between two enormous perpendicular rocky precipices, ascends and widens gradually for some yards. The road is on a narrow shelf of the rock, only just wide enough for a wagon, the rest of the gorge being a deep, rocky gully, about twenty yards across. Just at the top of the slight ascent in the road, the Mexicans, it seems, had planted their battery, having felled some trees and thrown them across the pass, thus occupying a raking position along it. The rocks on each side being too steep to climb, the only way for us would have been to carry the position by a *coup de main;* and this, well armed with artillery as they were, would have been no easy affair for us. In fact, five hundred resolute men could have defended the pass against twice our force. On the evening of the eighteenth day of August, we fired a salute of thirteen guns over the city of Santa Fe. Our first view of this place was very discouraging. Although much larger than any we had seen yet, still there were the same mud walls and roofs, and the accompaniments of dirt, pigs, and naked children. The city was, in a measure, deserted, the inhabitants having been persuaded that we should rob and ill treat every body, and destroy every thing. Sobbing and crying were heard from the houses, and it was only after a long speech from our general, that they were at all pacified.

THE city of Santa Fe, although spread over a large extent of ground, is very thinly inhabited, and, with the exception of the buildings around the public plaza, consists only of scattered huts, surrounded by large fields of Indian corn. On one side of the public square, which is of considerable extent, stands the governor's palace. It is the only building in the whole city having glazed windows. The palace is a long, mud edifice, one story high, with a portico formed by extending the roof some distance over the street, and supported by smooth trunks of trees. This portico is also extended in front of all the houses facing the plaza, and it proved a comfortable protection to our poor sentinels in rainy weather. The palace has, at one end, the government printing-office, and at the other the guard-house and calaboose, or prison. There are fearful stories, connecting Armijo's name with this prison, and the known brutality of his disposition has undoubtedly here led him to sacrifice, for their gold, better men than himself. Around the three remaining sides of the plaza were small shops, for the accommodation of traders, who immediately hire them to show off their goods to pedlers, who make this place their rendezvous. Indeed, it is this trade solely that gives Santa Fe its importance. These shops are not exactly such as our merchants at home would choose to show their goods in, being without a window. The only light that the dirty sales-room receives, is through the door. Fronting the governor's palace, on the plaza, stands an old church, which was robbed of all its plate and ornaments some time before we arrived. It is allowed to go to ruin in consequence of this desecration.

GENERAL KEARNY occupied the governor's palace, and quarters were selected for the men, and a hospital arranged. The Mexican houses, although very uncomfortable looking from the outside, are generally by no means so within, for, being well whitewashed there, they look clean, and are at all times cool. The walls are built of large bricks of mud, called *adobes*, about two feet long by one foot wide, and four inches thick; and the mud, being mixed with fine-cut straw, and dried in the sun, holds very well together if carefully handled. These are built up with mud for mortar, and very often plastered with the same substance, both inside and out, but as the tools used are only a spade and wooden trowel, the walls are not generally very smooth. On the top of these walls are laid young trees, for rafters, upon which are again laid small sticks, placed close together, and over all a coat of mud from six to eight inches in thickness. This roof, of course, is quite flat, but the walls being built at least a foot higher than the roof, on all sides, with holes here and there to let the water escape, they prevent the earth from washing off, and as the grass soon grows upon this roof, it becomes impervious to the water. The floor is nothing but the bare earth, trodden down hard, and I can say from experience, that it makes the hardest of beds, rock not even excepted! The walls and ceiling are whitewashed with a solution of bone-lime, made quite thick, and laid on by means of a buckskin. The houses are often whitewashed both externally and internally, and the lime, being of a brilliant white, renders the room very light, although, perhaps, the only opening is at the door, or a little grated window about a foot square, no window-glass being used. The houses of the poorer classes only consist of one room, with generally a partition wall as high as the waist, running almost across it; and around the walls are built broad seats, upon which the blankets that compose the beds of the family are laid during the day. At night the children use these benches as bedsteads, while the rest of the family, consisting probably of three generations, sleep promiscuously upon the floor, in filthy sheep-skins and blankets. The better sort sleep on sacks of feathers, and in low trundle bedsteads, hewn with an axe from the rough wood. The children, from four years old downwards, go entirely naked; the women are badly clothed, very dirty, ugly, and immodest; and the men are the meanest, most contemptible set of swarthy thieves and liars to be found any where. The rich ones will cheat and swindle, and the poor sneakingly pilfer any thing."*



ON the 2d of September, General Kearny, having appointed George Bent to be civil governor of New Mexico, started on a reconnoissance down the Rio Grande, with five hundred of Colonel Doniphan's regiment, one hundred and fifty artillery, and one hundred regulars. He came first to the village of San Domingo, which is inhabited by the Puebla Indians, and from which the town of Santa Fe is supplied with fruit. The Indians favoured the party with a military reception, displaying great skill in their evolutions, and much pride in their dresses and trappings. They were well pleased with the change in the government, and treated General Kearny and his companions with hospitality. At Albuquerque they found the residence of ex-governor Armijo, whose wife still remained there. The priest's house was remarked as one of the best in the country, the priests generally being the wealthiest men in the country.

Valentia was found to be a large and handsome town, supported by its vineyards and fruit trees. The better class of the population was composed of Indians, many of whom came to the camp with fruit, which they sold to the penniless soldiers, taking as pay the metal buttons from the military coats, rating their value at twelve and a half cents each. General Kearny arrived at Tomae on the eve of a religious fete, in which the figure of the Virgin Mary was carried about the streets in a procession, General Kearny and his officers walking in it with lighted candles in their hands. The day closed with fireworks and fandangos.

During the latter part of September, a detachment of fifty men marched northward, under Captain Fischer, to bring in some of the Apache Indians, who had been committing depredations on the Mexicans. The character of this tribe may be inferred from their

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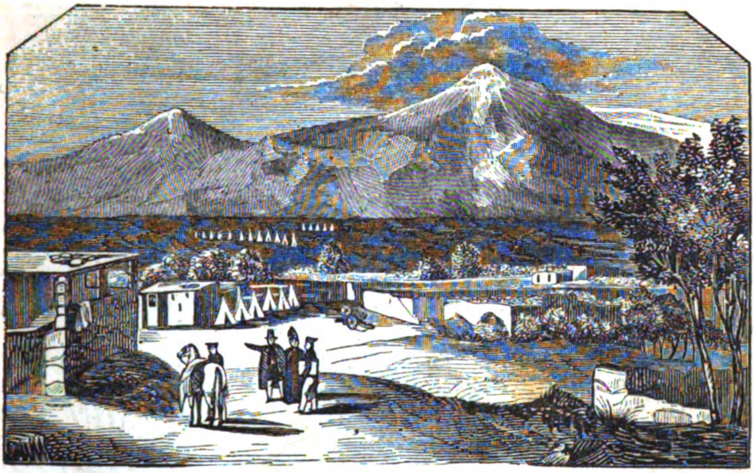
* Campaign in New Mexico, by Frank S. Edwards.

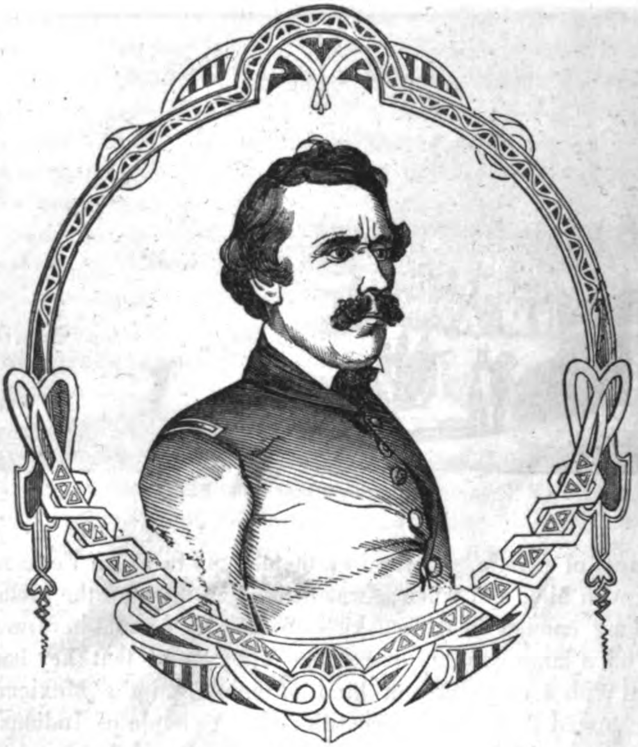


Encampment near Valentia.

treatment of Armijo. Several of them came to Santa Fe to make a treaty with him, and when it was concluded they left the town, stopping long enough in the outskirts to murder several herdsmen and carry off a large quantity of cattle. They found that they had now to deal with a very different kind of men from the Mexicans, and they changed their tactics accordingly. A couple of Indians could make twenty armed Mexicans fly at any time, and they were equally pleased and alarmed to see Captain Fischer marching, with fifty men, to subdue them, however numerous they might be. Their chiefs came to him, and accompanied him back to Santa Fe, where they made a treaty of peace.

A fort had been commenced within six hundred yards of the town, which, under the superintendence of Lieutenants Emory, Gilmer, and Peck, became an imposing structure, and was named, in honour of the secretary of war, Fort Marcy. Arrangements were made for the civil government of the country; civil officers were appointed, and a code of laws promulgated, for which General Kearny acknowledges his indebtedness to Colonel Doniphan, who was assisted in their preparation by a private in his regiment, the Hon. Willard P. Hall.

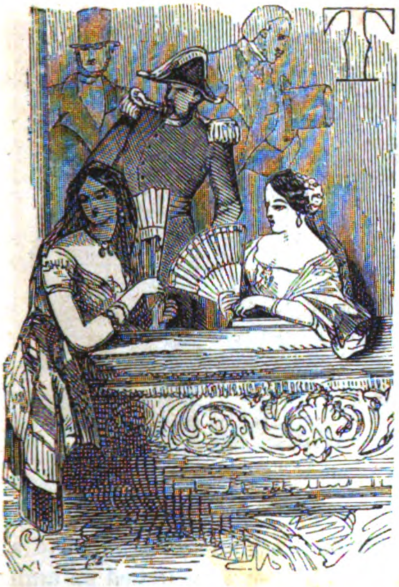
On the 25th of September, having received information of the certain approach of the Missouri regiment, under Colonel Price, and the Mormons, General Kearny departed from Santa Fe to march over a thousand miles of country, much of which was a desert, to California. He had made the following distribution of his forces. The United States dragoons, under Major Sumner, Captain Hudson's com-



Major Sumner.

pany, and the Mormon battalion, were to accompany him to California. Major Clark's St. Louis artillery companies, and the two companies of infantry under Captains Angney and Murphy, were to remain at Santa Fe. Colonel Doniphan's regiment was to take post at Tomae, a station forty miles south of Albuquerque, until the arrival of Colonel Price, when they were to be relieved at Tomae by two companies of Price's regiment, and Colonel Doniphan was to march to Chihuahua and report to General Wool, who was supposed to be by this time in possession of that city.

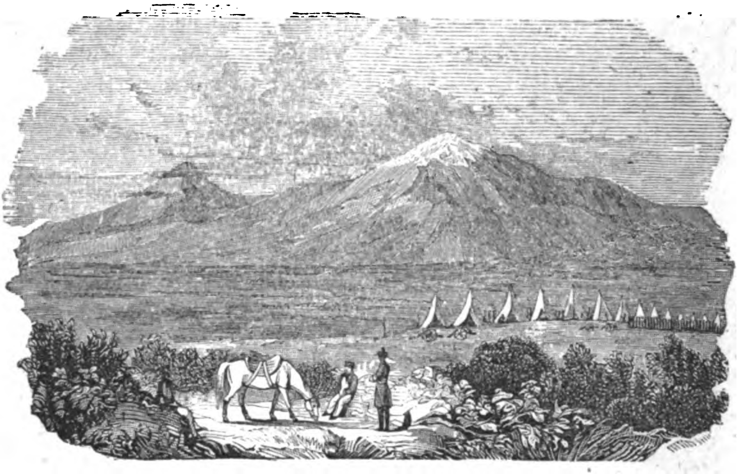
Soon after leaving Santa Fe, General Kearny met an express bringing to Washington an account of the exploits of Colonel Fremont in California, which induced the general to send back nearly half of h[illegible] men, some of whom were kept at Albuquerque, and the remainder sent to Fort Leavenworth. While General Kearny was marching forward towards California, the little army left in possession of Santa Fe were not unoccupied. The drill and parade filled up the long intervals of inaction; and the soldiers were not without amusement.



THE army had its theatre. In November a dramatic society was started by some of the officers of Major Clark's battalion at Santa Fe. Governor Bent supplied them with a fandango room; machinery, scenery, and a wardrobe, were manufactured with Yankee ingenuity, and the performances commenced with Pizarro and Bombastes Furioso. Some of the boyish heroes enacted the female characters quite naturally; and, though the Mexican women smoked during the whole play, and always laughed when they should have cried, the audiences were large and fashionable.

Towards the end of November, Colonel D. D. Mitchell was despatched by Colonel Price from Santa Fe, with ninety-five picked men, to co-operate with Colonel Doniphan in opening a communication with Chihuahua and General Wool. This body found Colonel Doniphan at Valverde, with only eighty men under his command. The whole of his force had been engaged, in separate divisions, in a campaign against the Navajos Indians; and, though acting in the middle of winter, without any of the necessaries of a winter campaign, he was entirely successful.

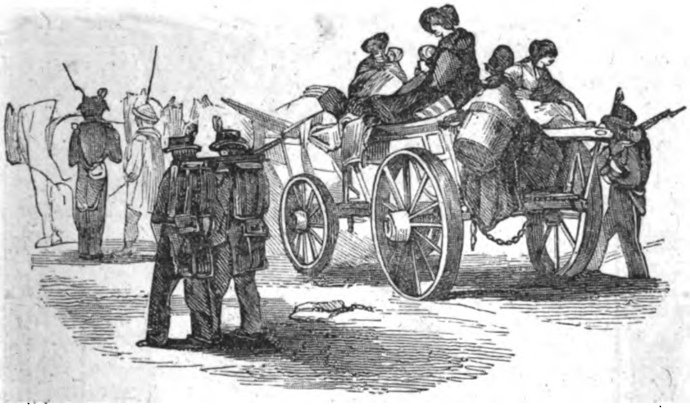
One of his battalions was in advance, under Major Gilpin, and the colonel himself determined to advance with Mitchell's escort, and allow his scattered command to overtake him on the road. He marched along the Rio Grande to Fray Christobal, where he halted one day, to collect all his force, and cook two days' provisions preparatory to crossing the desert of La Jornada del Muerto, the Day's Journey of Death. This was a long, dry extent of road, about sixty miles in length, by Colonel Doniphan's track, which had obtained its name from the circumstance of a Mexican having attempted to cross it in a day, without food or water, and perished in consequence. The Mexicans used the term jornada in estimating distances; thus, when a route was said to be so many jornadas in length, it was meant that to encamp at water each night, it would take so many days to march over it. The soldiers, however, never took the pains to observe the meaning of the term, and in all the accounts given of this famous



Encampment at Fray Christobal.

expedition by the volunteers, we find the term always applied to a long dry extent of road without water. The army marched on until midnight of the first day, and resumed the road at daybreak in the morning. They noticed with surprise, that though there was little rain and no water, the grass here was finer and better than they had ever seen elsewhere. Here, too, they first met with a species of palm, the root of which the Mexicans used as a substitute for soap, whence the soldiers called it soap-weed. This is an exceedingly useful plant to the people, who use its leaves for the manufacture of hats, ropes, and sacks, it being, when dressed, not unlike the coarser qualities of manilla hemp. The leaves are two feet and a half in length, armed at the end with a long thorn, and of a dark green colour. They fall to the ground as the foliage decays, and burn rapidly, a circumstance which gave much comfort to the soldiers during the cold nights spent on the march. The trunk of the tree does not grow more than six feet high, and is surmounted at the end by a head of stiff leaves. The soap-weeds had one quality which proved exceedingly provoking to the volunteers. They assumed in the twilight the most deceptive forms, causing the sentinel to challenge them as men, with the cry of "who goes there," and leading the poor fellows on a hunt for an hour in the gray of the morning, by assuming, at a little distance, the exact form of his missing horse or mule.

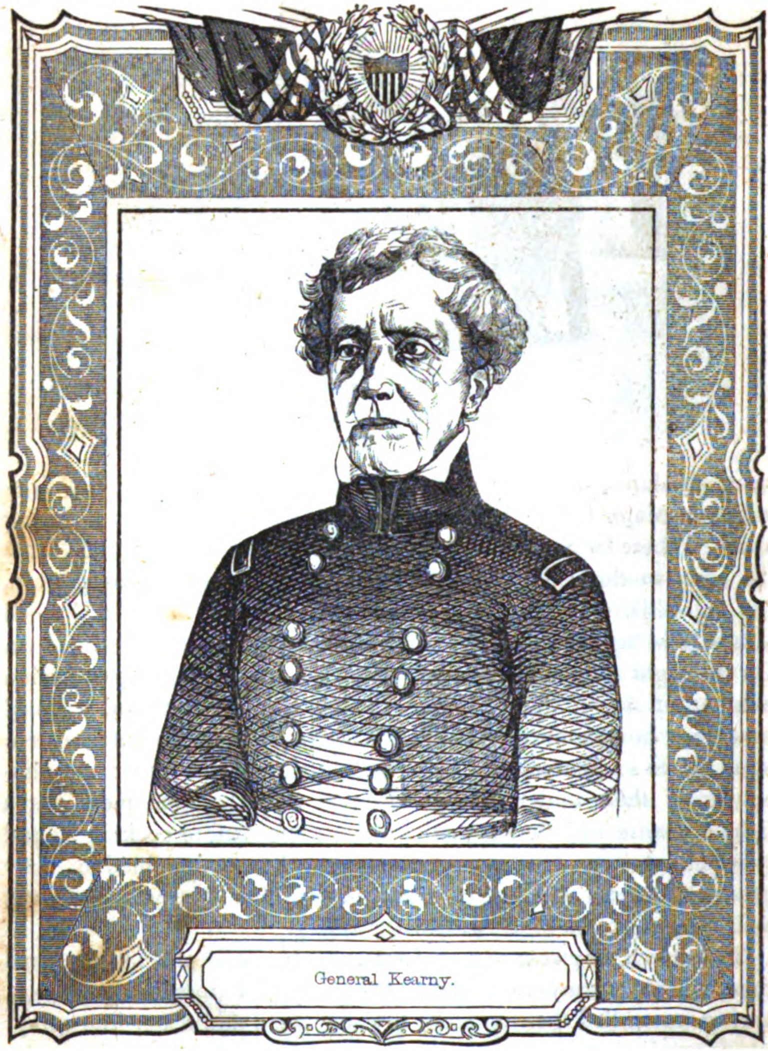
The army, on the second night, overtook a large party of traders, with three hundred conestoga wagons laden with goods. They were expecting an attack from a Mexican robber priest, Ortiz, and were



The Traders.

in much alarm, which Colonel Doniphan's arrival ended. The battalion of Major Gilpin was found near the town of Doña Ana, having reached there by a slightly different road. He gave his opinion that the army would have some difficulty in entering the town of El Paso, but the soldiers thought the news too good to be true, and charged him with being too sanguine. The army moved on towards the town. On the night of the 24th of December, the army had a repast from a number of sheep, which, though healthy and well grown, weighed seventeen pounds on an average. The spirits of the volunteers were at all times exuberant, and gave them great support under the difficulties of their undertaking. On this occasion, one mess put a lighted candle into the carcass of their sheep before cooking it, and proved that it made a capital lantern. They complained of their quartermaster for not having reserved such fine mutton to help out their dinner on the morrow, Christmas day.

The march was resumed on Christmas day, and pursued for some time, when the army encamped on the road. The troops all dispersed, having unsaddled their animals, to carry wood and water into camp, when an immense cloud of dust was observed at a distance by several from different points, and they began to hurry into the camp to prepare for an emergency. They were almost too late. The enemy had taken the camp by surprise. There were not a hundred and fifty men there when they came up, and the rear guard was six miles behind, with the wagon train spread along the road. This was in charge of Quartermaster-Sergeant Edwards, who hastened them up, and began to corraal them. The wagons containing the ammunition of Colonel Doniphan's regiment were behind, but fortunately, one of those brought by Colonel Mitchell,



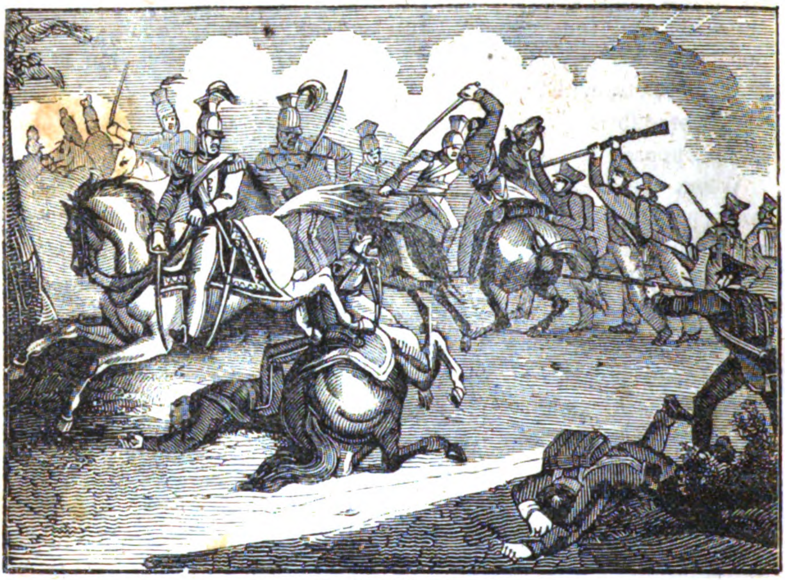
General Kearny.

from Santa Fe, was in front, and Mr. Edwards began to get out its contents, the wagons putting themselves into form as they came up. The rapid advance of the enemy allowed no time for saddling horses, so the troops drew up across the road on foot, in a single line, determined to gain a victory as infantry. The enemy drew up at the top of a slight rise in the ground, in good order, with their cavalry on the right, and a small howitzer in the centre. Their left flank and body was composed of infantry. They made a gay appearance, particularly the cavalry. These were clad in bright scar let coats, with bell buttons and white belts, carrying sabres and carbines, and long lances, with red and green pennons. Their polished arms gave them quite a shining appearance, to which their brass helmets, with large black plumes, added not a little. Their whole force formed quite a contrast to the "rough, ready, and ragged" group opposed to them.

When the Mexicans halted, a lieutenant came forward from their ranks, waving a black flag, with a skull and cross-bones worked upon it. The American interpreter, Thomas Caldwell, advanced to meet him. The lieutentant demanded that the American commander should come into his camp and have a parley. Mr. Caldwell replied, "If your general wants to see our commander let him come here." "We shall break your ranks, then, and take him there," was the retort of the Mexican. "Come and take him," said Mr. Caldwell; and the Mexican officer rode back, exclaiming, "a curse on you. Prepare for a charge. We give no quarter, and ask none."

When he reached his lines, they opened their fire, advancing steadily. The charge was so handsomely made as to win the admiration of the volunteers, who looked on at their approach, and while they fired two volleys. The shot from their guns passed over the heads of the troops, but seriously incommoded Mr. Edwards's party at the wagons in the rear. They poured in their third fire at close pistol-shot, and wounded several of the Americans, who, as the smoke of the discharge lifted sufficiently to make a sure aim, poured in two volleys from their rifles. At this moment, the Mexican dragoons were charging on the left of the line, but the heavy shower of balls turned them, and they wheeled, turned the flank and came down upon the wagon train. Mr. Edwards had about fifteen men under his command here, and seeing the enemy advancing, he ordered the party to shelter themselves behind the wagons, until the red coats were within ten yards, when each stepped out and gave them the contents of his piece. They fell back over a rising piece of ground, hotly pursued by fifteen mounted Americans.

Just at the time of delivering the second volley, a part of the Howard, company headed by Lieutenant Wright, took it into their heads to break the line, ran up to the Mexican cannon in front of them, and forcibly secured and dragged it into their own ranks. This act, daring and desperate, added to the perplexity of the Mexicans, who said they could not understand such a people. When their first fire had been given they saw the right wing of the Americans kneel down on the ground, and supposed them to have been swept away by their shot, and it was an incomprehensible mystery to them to find them sustain three volleys without returning one, and, when they were all

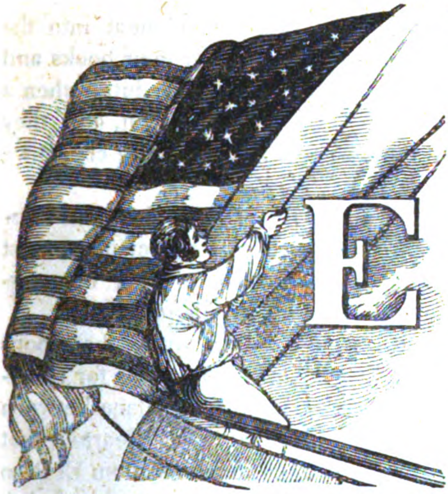


Battle of Bracito.

shot down, to see fresh enemies jump up out of the grass. It was difficult to get more than two shots at them, though a few of the most fortunate had five or six. The Mexicans lost about two hundred men in killed and wounded, and left their arms, provisions, and stores, on the field of battle. They numbered about twelve hundred in all. Colonel Doniphan had but five hundred with him, and these were not all engaged. He had seven men wounded, but none killed. The Mexican women were gloriously represented in this fight. Two of them were engaged in the battle, serving at the cannon. One of them unfortunately was shot in the forehead, and the other, finding the battle lost, bravely bore her dying companion off the field.

The dragoons, who had behaved so gallantly, met with a sad fate. The little squadron of American horse chased them into the mountains, where a hostile band of Navajos Indians, who had been watching the struggle in their concealment, set on them, and slew almost the whole of them for the sake of their bright uniforms and arms. Such was the first battle fought by the "Army of the West," called the battle of Bracito, from the bend of the river near which it was fought, which bears this name.

It is remarkable on many accounts, besides that of being the earliest in the campaign. It was fought under every disadvantage for our countrymen. The surprise, the freshness of the troops, the scattered state of the force, the exposure of the train, were all against them.



EL PASO, near which the battle of Bracito was fought, is a town of some three thousand inhabitants, on the high road from New Mexico to Chihuahua. No attempt was made to defend it by the dispirited Mexicans, and Colonel Doniphan entered it on the 27th of December. He determined to wait here for the arrival of a reinforcement from Santa Fe. He had sent an express thither some time previously to Major Clarke, requesting that officer to come and join him, if possible, and at all events to send him Captain Weightman, with the battery, and thirty or forty men. Captain Weightman immediately started with six pieces of artillery, forty-five Laclede rangers, and sixty-five men of his own country, and made a forced march of three hundred and fifty miles in the dead of winter, with an endurance and perseverance almost unequalled in history. He was passed on the road by Major Clark, who hurried on to El Paso, and found that the Americans were expecting a night attack from the enemy [January 25.] He immediately sent back an express with twenty-eight fresh mules and information of the expected battle. Captain Weightman met the express, just as he was emerging from the fatiguing march over the Jornada del Muerto. He pushed forward twenty-two miles to Doña Ana, and there informed his command of the prospect of a fight, and of his intention to leave there all his baggage, and march at once with arms, ammunition, and as much food as they could carry ready cooked. He started at midnight on the 30th of January, and moved with such celerity as to reach El Paso at one o'clock in the next night, making a distance of sixty-one miles in one day, although the weather was so cold that they had to make fires every four or five miles, at which the men would stop a few at a time, to warm themselves, and then hurry onward after the battery. Their sufferings on the march were not more remarkable than their chivalric devotion. Between Santa Fe and El Paso, they were obliged to ford the Rio Grande three times. On one occasion, the river was frozen over except in the middle, where masses of floating ice were whirled along by the current. The guns, caissons, and baggage were in great danger of being lost by the ice and by quicksands. To save the artillery it became necessary to order a large detachment into the deep and chilling waters, and the orderlies produced their books and were about to name the men who should perform this duty, when a general shout burst forth from the gallant hearted men, and they rushed in a mass to perform the perilous duty, with the cry, "we are volunteers."*

The applause of their comrades and Colonel Doniphan was liberally bestowed, and, with the approval of their own consciences, must have compensated them for their disappointment, when they discovered that they had been the victims of a false alarm.

RUMOURS were brought while the troops were at El Paso, of preparations for resistance at Carrizal, a fortified place between them and Chihuahua. They learned that regular messengers were sent from El Paso to that place, and suspecting a priest named Ortiz, they laid a trap for him, which partially failed through the impatience of the officer in charge. He found a horse at the priest's house ready saddled and bridled, and, instead of waiting until his rider should have started, and then seized him, to ascertain what he carried, the officer surrounded the house, and politely knocked at the door. The priest and two gentlemen were brought to the colonel's quarters, and Ortiz was upbraided with treachery. He remarked that *he* did not consider the delivery of his country from a foreign enemy, by any means whatever, *treachery*. He proclaimed his enmity to Americans, but announced that his efforts to free the country of them would be open ones, and that he would not attempt to incite an insurrection because he knew it would be worse than useless.

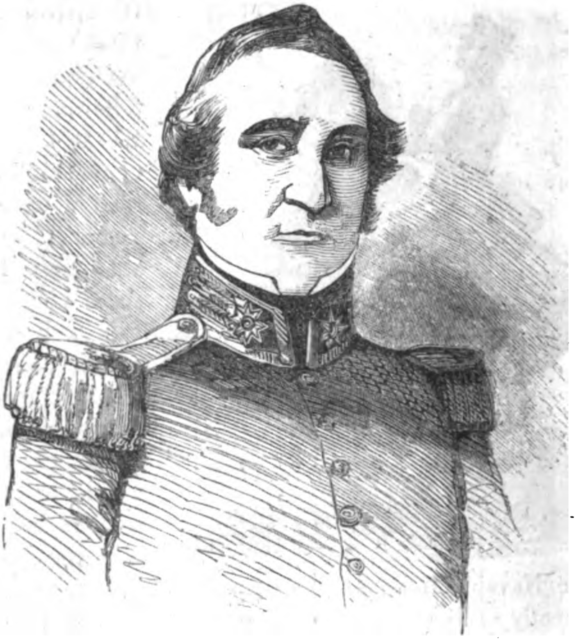
Colonel Dóniphan admired his sentiments, but informed him that he would take care to prevent him from carrying them into effect, by keeping a strict watch over him. Ortiz had been at Bracito, and the colonel pithily concluded his address by remarking, that as he had seen how his countrymen had fought on ground of their own selecting, he would take him along southward, that he might have an opportunity of comparing it with their deeds when fighting was to be done on ground of the colonel's choosing. The holy father accordingly accompanied the expedition to Chihuahua.†

*** Conquest of California and New Mexico, by J. M. Cutts, Esq.**

† Edwards's Campaign.

THE arrival of Major Clark and Captain Weightman with their followers, increased the number of the command to a thousand men, whose appearance on parade was most ludicrous, shoes being a luxury, hats well ventilated, no two pair of pantaloons alike, and the only whole ones being those of buckskin, which a few lucky soldiers had obtained in the campaign against the Navajos Indians. Few owned a jacket, and the shirts were frequently sadly out of repair. On the 11th of February, however, the army set out on the road for Chihuahua. After marching a hundred and forty-five miles, a mail from Santa Fe was received, and they learned that General Wool had changed his route, and was not at Chihuahua, but Colonel Doniphan received no despatches, and he called a council of war to decide upon their further movements. It was decided to proceed. In allusion to this determination, Colonel Benton made the following remarks, in his speech to the returning volunteers.

"I have said that you made your long expedition without government orders, and so, indeed, you did. You received no orders from your government, but without knowing it, you were fulfilling its orders—orders which never reached you. Happy the soldier who executes the command of his government; happier still he who anticipates command, and does what is wanted before he is bid. This is your case. You did the right thing at the right time, and what the government intended you to do, and without knowing its intention. The facts are these: Early in the month of November last, the president asked my opinion on the manner of conducting the war. I submitted a plan to him, which, in addition to other things, required all the disposable troops in New Mexico, and all the Americans in that quarter who could be engaged for a dashing expedition, to move down through Chihuahua and the state of Durango, and, if necessary, to Zacatecas, and get into communication with General Taylor's right



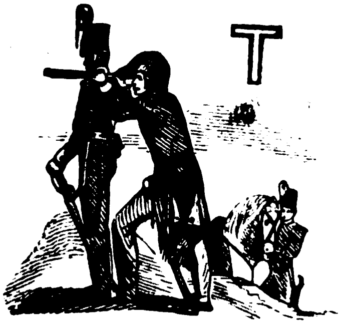
Colonel Benton.

as early as possible in the month of March. In fact, the disposable Missourians in New Mexico, were to be one of three columns destined for a combined movement on the city of Mexico, all to be on the table-land, and ready for movement in the month of March. The president approved the plan, and the Missourians being most distant, orders were despatched to New Mexico, to put them in motion. Mr. Solomon Sublette carried the order, and delivered it to the commanding officer at Santa Fe, Colonel Price, on the 23d day of February—just five days before you fought the marvellous battle of Sacramento.

"I well remember what passed between the president and myself, at the time he resolved to give this order. It awakened his solicitude for your safety. It was to send a small body of men a great distance into the heart of a hostile country, and upon the contingency of uniting in a combined movement, the means for which had not yet been obtained from Congress. The president made it a question, and very properly, whether it was safe or prudent to start the small Missouri column before the movement of the left and of the centre was assured. I answered, that my own rule in public affairs was to do what I thought was right, and leave it to others to do what they thought was right; and that I believed it the proper course for him to follow on the present occasion. On this view he acted He gave the order to go, without waiting to see whether Congress would furnish the means of executing the combined plan; and, for his consolation, I undertook to guarantee your safety. Let the worst come to the worst, I promised him that you would take care of yourselves. Though the other parts of the plan should fail—though you should become far involved in the advance, and deeply compromised in the enemy's country, and without support—still I relied on your courage, skill, and enterprise to extricate yourselves from every danger—to *make daylight through all the Mexicans that should stand before you*—cut your way out—and make good your retreat to Taylor's camp."

THE road they traversed for the ensuing ten days was more dreary and desolate than any they had hitherto marched over, excepting the Jornada del Muerto. Scarcely had they succeeded in getting the trains through one of the long dry tracts of country when another was entered. Fire on the grass behind them, twice made them harness up and run for their lives, after the close of a fatiguing march. The artillery was only saved by being plunged into a shallow salt lake, while the men formed a line across the country, at an advantageous point, and checked the fire by beating it out with the branches of trees in their hands. They met no resistance at Carrizal, but every thing indicated that the enemy would be met in force in a short time, and the feverish state of alarm added to their difficulties. Once or twice they were obliged to prepare suddenly for action on false alarms, and the terrible marches over the Jornada were made still more discouraging, by the rumours that they would be attacked at its extremity, when they and their animals should be exhausted by thirst.

On the 27th day of February, it became conclusive that a battle would be fought on the following day. Two traders had chased a Mexican so hard as to force him to dismount and seek safety on foot. An elegantly caparisoned horse, which he had ridden, was brought into camp. The American picket-guard, going out after dark to take up their position, had met the advance guard of the foe, and though only half as numerous, they drove them back. At sunrise on the 28th of February, the army took up the line of march, and formed the whole train, consisting of three hundred and fifteen heavy traders' wagons, and our commissary and company wagons, into four columns, thus shortening the length of the line, and making it more easily protected. The artillery and all the troops, except two hundred cavalry proper, were placed in the intervals between the columns of wagons, thus concealing the force and its position, by masking it with the cavalry. When within three miles, the position of the enemy was ascertained by a reconnoissance.



THE able and gallant Major Clark, who made the examination of the enemy's position, reported "that his intrenchments and redoubts occupied the brow of an elevation extending across the ridge between the Arroyo Seco and that of Sacramento—both of which at this point cross the valley from the elevated ridge of mountains in the rear of the village of Torreon, known by the name of Sierra de Victoriano, that of Nombre de Dios on the east, and through which runs the Rio del Nombre de Dios. This valley is about four miles in width, and intrenched by the enemy entirely across, from mountain to mountain, the road to the city of Chihuahua running directly through its centre, and of necessity, passing near to and crossing the Rio Sacramento, at the Rancho Sacramento, a strongly built and fortified house, with adjoining corraals, and other inclosures, belonging to Angel Trias, the governor of Chihuahua. From observation, it was ascertained that the enemy had occupied the site between these hills, and that the batteries upon them were supported by infantry—his cavalry being in advanced positions formed into three columns between the Arroyo Seco and our advance. During these observations, the enemy's advance guard discovering my party, approached rapidly, with the evident intention of intercepting it, but being met by that of our troops, which I had sent forward, it as rapidly retreated. At this time also, the three columns of the enemy's cavalry recrossed the Arroyo Seco, and retired behind their intrenchments. I then approached within six hundred yards of the most advanced redoubt, from which point the enemy's formation was plainly discernible. The intrenchments consisted of a line with intervals composed of circular redoubts, from three to five hundred yards interval, with intrenchments between each, covering batteries partly masked by cavalry. The redoubt nearest to my position contained two pieces of cannon, supported by several hundred infantry.

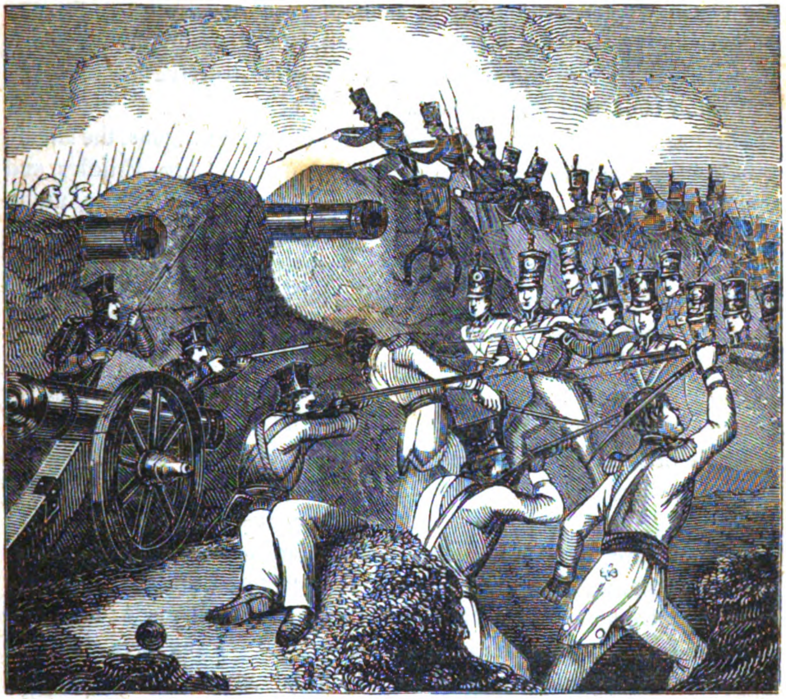
"The enemy's right and left were strong positions; the Cerro Frijoles on his right, and having high precipitous sides, with a redoubt commanding the surrounding country, and the pass leading towards Chihuahua, through the Arroyo Seco. The Cerro Sacramento on his left, consisting of a pile of immense volcanic rocks, surmounted by a battery, commanded the main road to Chihuahua, leading directly in front of the enemy's intrenchments; crossing the Rio Sacramento at the rancho, directly under its fire, and also commanding the road from Torreon, immediately in its rear; the crossing of the main road over the Arroyo Seco, at the point from which my reconnoissance was made, laid directly under the fire of the batteries on the enemy's right, which rendered it necessary to ascertain the practicability of a route more distant from the enemy's intrenchments. The passage was found to be practicable, with some little labour; and a point selected as the best for the passage of the artillery and wagons, and merchants' trains."

THE only chance of fighting them on at all even ground, consisted in getting possession of the table-land between the Seco and Sacramento. Major Clark advanced to within fifteen hundred yards of the enemy's most advanced position, then suddenly diverged to the right, crossed the Arroyo Seco without reach of the enemy's fire, and rapidly advanced to the table-land. The Americans displayed the utmost enthusiasm. The dense mass of the enemy, and his almost impregnable position, only made them the more eager for the conflict, and their conversation and bearing were such as might have been expected from men going to a fandango rather than into such an unequal fight. But they fought under the invincible banner of the stars and stripes, and their assurance of victory was rendered doubly sure by a joyful omen.

It was certainly one of the most perilous attempts made in the whole course of the war, this mere handful of men deliberately advancing to storm the intrenched position of a force so greatly superior, a force, too, which was moved to the encounter by every motive which ordinarily stimulates men to do and dare on the field of battle. The Mexicans were about to fight for their altars and their homes, almost in the presence of their wives and children. The Americans were to do battle for the honour of their flag.

AS they gained the table-land an American eagle was seen sailing slowly and majestically over their heads. The whole army paused for a moment or two to gaze at him, and then turned again towards the foe. He had advanced from his intrenchments to prevent the Americans from seizing upon the heights, but he miscalculated the time of their movements, and they had succeeded in forming before his cavalry reached their position. The battery occupied the centre; on the right and left of it were two companies of cavalry, one of them Colonel Mitchell's escort; and behind, dismounted and acting as infantry, stood the rest of the forces. The enemy's artillery opened upon them as they were forming. When their cavalry had advanced within nine hundred yards of the American line, Captain Weightman opened a terrible fire upon them, working his pieces with great rapidity, and mowing lanes through their solid columns. Major Clark and his officers stood in the centre of the battery. Farther to the right, Colonel Doniphan was sitting on his charger, whittling a piece of wood, one leg crossed over the saddle, and his eye dancing with joy at the spirit of his little band. And thus they remained for half an hour, dodging the cannon balls which they could see coming, while the smaller balls fell among them, a copper hail, almost disregarded. Lieutenant Dorn had his horse's head carried away, and a German volunteer rolled off his horse, exclaiming that he was killed. He had received a wound in the leg, but on examining its extent, he coolly tied it up tightly with his handkerchief, and was helped into the saddle again. As yet no serious damage was done to the men, though several animals were slain or disabled. The fire of Captain Weightman's pieces, however, had been more effective. One of the enemy's guns had been dismounted, and his cavalry dispersed, and he was forced to retire again behind his intrenchments.

The firing now ceased for a time, the enemy removing his cannon and wounded, while the Americans changed their position to more advantageous ground. This being done, the gallant colonel yielded to the solicitations of his men, and a charge was ordered. Colonel Mitchell, mounted on his white charger, waved them on with his sabre; Captain Read followed, with his company; Major Owens, a trader, spurred into the foremost rank, and Captain Weightman thundered after them with his howitzers, in full gallop. Colonel Doniphan covered his face with his hands as they started, and groaned

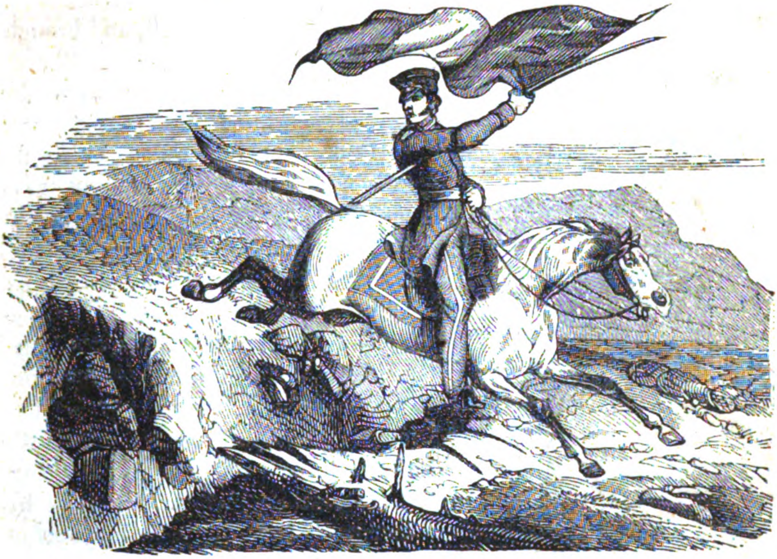


Battle of Sacramento.

out, "My God! they're gone! the boys will all be killed!" Then recovering himself, he struck his spurs into his horse, and dashed after them. Captain Weightman unlimbered within fifty yards of the enemy's intrenchments, and poured a destructive fire of canister into his ranks, then passed through it in the face of the enemy, and within a few feet of the ditches, then threw his fire to the right and left, raking the whole line of the enemy's position. Just at the most critical moment, a tipsy officer, whose potations had not added to his valour, stuttered out a command to halt, and a momentary indecision was produced, but one of the sutlers, a gallant fellow, named Pomeroy, exclaimed, "for God's sake, advance!" and the line dashed forward again. The men who had followed the cavalry in the charge, now poured over the breastworks and forced the enemy out.

Under a heavy fire of artillery and small arms, Major Gilpin charged upon the enemy's centre, and forced him from his intrenchments. The American battery opened upon the enemy's extreme right, from which a heavy fire had been kept up upon the line and a wagon train. Two of the enemy's guns there were soon dismounted, that battery silenced, and the enemy dislodged from the redoubt on the Cerro Frijoles. A body of lancers were seen forming for the purpose of out-flanking the American left, and attacking the merchant train. Major Clark opened on them a very destructive fire of grape and small shot, and soon cleared the field of them.

Having vacated his intrenchments, and deserted his guns, the enemy was hotly pursued towards the mountains, beyond Cerro Frijoles, and down Arroyo Seco de Sacramento, by both wings of the army, under Colonel Mitchell, Colonel Jackson, Major Gilpin, and Captain Weightman, with the howitzers. These were repeatedly fired with great effect. At one time the gallant Weightman, pressing on in front, found that his guns were not following. He rode back to where, through some misunderstanding, they had stopped, and shouted, "On with that battery. If I knew who had halted you, I'd cut him down." He had no further reason to complain of its movements. Meanwhile the enemy's battery on the Cerro Sacramento had been strengthened by a number of pieces taken from the other intrenchments. To cover the flight of their troops from the intrenched camp, they opened a very heavy fire upon the pursuing forces and the wagons in the rear. Without waiting for orders, Major Clark occupied the nearest of the enemy's intrenchments, distant about twelve hundred yards; and, notwithstanding that the elevated position of the Mexicans gave them the advantage of a plunging fire into the intrenchments, and the greater range of their guns, the first cannon fired by the Americans dismounted one of the enemy's pieces, and the others were successively silenced. They commenced a precipitate retreat, under the fire of Major Clark's guns, which only ceased when Colonel Mitchell was seen to scale the hill, followed by the indefatigable Weightman with his howitzers, and secure the last position of the Mexicans. The gallant colonel came galloping down from the heights on his splendid white charger, waving, as a proud token of his successful prowess, the standard of the beaten enemy. The victors were about to continue the pursuit, when they were recalled to the camp by Colonel Doniphan. The fight lasted three hours, during the whole of which, says Major Clark, every officer and man did his duty with cheerfulness, coolness, and precision, as is shown by the admirable effect produced by their fire, the great accuracy of their aim, their expedition and ingenuity in supplying deficiencies in the field during the action, and the prompt management of their pieces, rendered still more remarkable from the fact, that, during the fight, he had less than two-thirds the number of cannoneers generally required for the service of light artillery, and but four of the twelve artillery carriages belonging to the battery harnessed with horses; the other eight being drawn by mules.



Colonel Mitchell bearing off the Mexican Standard.

As long as the enemy continued to occupy his position, the American artillery was a constant point of attack, yet notwithstanding the great quantity of balls poured upon it, not a man attached to it was hurt, nor a gun struck, excepting in one instance, when a ball struck the tire of a wheel and glanced off without injuring it. Colonel Doniphan bestowed great praise on his whole force, but especially upon the artillery. "Much has been said, and justly," he remarks, "of the gallantry of our artillery unlimbering within two hundred and fifty yards of the enemy at Palo Alto; but how much more daring was the charge of Captain Weightman, when he unlimbered within fifty yards of the redoubts of the enemy."

The Mexicans lost their whole park of artillery, consisting of ten pieces, two nine, two eight, four six, and two four-pounders, and six culverins, or rampart pieces, throwing a pound of lead at a shot. They had three hundred killed, as many wounded, many of whom afterwards died, and forty prisoners. They left behind them several loads of ammunition, and nine wagon loads or thirteen thousand pounds of hard bread, four loads of dried meat, a large quantity of sweetened flour, seven hundred thousand cigaritos, seven thousand head of cattle, and ten *acres* of sheep.*

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* Edwards's Campaign.

THE black flag which had been shown them at Bracito, was found on the field, and brought home to Missouri, by Major Clark. Several national and regimental colours were also taken, and several bundles of rope cut into convenient pieces, called lariats, to tie the Americans with, when they should have been conquered. What amused the soldiers more, was an attempted improvement upon General Jackson's defence at New Orleans. This production of Mexican ingenuity consisted in great quantities of small bags, which a Mexican officer said were to have been filled with cotton, and hung round the soldiers' necks as armour. However effective this might have proved against balls, it would have afforded little safety from the Missourians, who violated all rules in their fighting. Private Richardson relates an anecdote, in his Journal, of one of his comrades in this battle, who slew one Mexican with the contents of his rifle, and was beset by another armed with a lance, before he had time to reload. Not desiring to be spitted, the volunteer resorted to *natural* means of defence. He picked up a great stone, threw it with such force as to knock his opponent down, and then beat out his brains with the butt of his rifle.

The Americans seem to have been under the special protection of Providence. Notwithstanding the fierceness of the battle, its duration, and the hand to hand nature of the conflict, they had but one man killed, one mortally wounded, and seven others who received bad wounds, but lost no limbs. Others received slight scratches and contusions, but were not at all disabled, and not reported. Colonel Doniphan's force numbered nine hundred and twenty-four men, one hundred of whom were engaged in holding horses and driving teams. Colonel Doniphan makes the force of the enemy to be twelve hundred cavalry, three hundred artillery, and fourteen hundred and twenty rancheros; but Mr. Edwards says that he saw their adjutant-general's book, which showed their force to be four thousand two hundred men. Besides numbers, they had the advantage of posessing one major-general, five brigadiers, and an unlimited number of colonels and other officers.

Such was the battle of Sacramento, as we find it given in the official report of Colonel Doniphan, the report of Major Clark to that officer, in the work of Mr. Edwards, (the most graphic and eloquent that has yet appeared upon the subject of the Mexican war,) and in the public prints. Perhaps the best idea of the way in which the victory was won may be obtained from Colonel Doniphan's account of it, as given to General Taylor afterwards, at the Walnut Springs. We quote Mr. Edwards: "By-the-by, colonel," said General Taylor, "every one is talking of your charge at Sacramento. I understand it was a brilliant affair. I wish you would give me a description of it, and of your manœuvers." "Manœuvers be hanged," returned Doniphan, and added, "I don't know any thing about the charge, except that my boys kept coming to me to let them charge, but I would not permit them; for I was afraid they would be all cut to pieces. At last, I saw a favourable moment, and told them they might go—they were off like a shot—and that's all I know about it!"

On the day after the battle, the army marched a short distance, and then halted to mend their ragged clothes, and fix up for a triumphal entry into Chihuahua, which they entered the next day. On the third of the month, the body of Major Owens, who was the only man killed in the battle, was interred with the honours of war.

CHIHUAHUA became, like Santa Fe, the starting point of a new expedition. To use the eloquent language of Mr. Benton, "General Taylor was some where—no one knew exactly where—but some seven or eight hundred miles towards the other side of Mexico. They had heard that he had been defeated—that Buena Vista had not been a *good prospect* to him. Like good Americans, they did not believe a word of it; but, like good soldiers, they thought it best to go and see." A council was held first, and opinions were much divided as to the best course to pursue. At an adjourned meeting some days afterwards, some said they had been twice disappointed in finding General Wool, at El Paso and at Chihuahua, and they thought they had gone quite far enough wool gathering. At all events, they had better remain for a while in their present comfortable quarters, and repose from the fatigues of their great expedition. Colonel Doniphan listened for a considerable time to their arguments, with some surprise and impatience, but at length gave his opinion, commencing by bringing his ponderous fist down on the table with considerable force. He was not long in delivering himself. He told them that they might possibly have found *fair* reasons for staying, but he was "for going home to Sarah and the children." An express of twelve men was sent to General Taylor, to learn whether they should come and join him, or return home by the way of Texas. It returned in a short time with orders to march forward to join him by the way of Parras and Saltillo. On the 25th of April, the army left Chihuahua for Saltillo, where he reported to General Wool on the 22d of May.

THIS was a toilsome march, in which hardships had to be encountered scarcely less grievous than those they had already undergone. Its principal event was an exploit performed by Captain Reid, and a handful of volunteers, at a rancho called El Paso. A band of some sixty Lipaus, a branch of the Camanche Indians, had been observed coming up the valley from San Luis Potosi, with plunder, many stolen horses, and captive Mexicans. An advanced guard, under Colonel Mitchell, was in Parras, twenty-five miles off, where they had been touched by learning the kindness of the Mexican women to the wounded soldiers of General Wool's column. They were applied to for aid, by the owner of El Paso, who felt confident that the Indians would come to attack his rancho. He offered each one that would go up and repel them, the use of a good pony for the purpose; and fifteen of them volunteered. By hard riding, they got to the rancho, which was thirty miles off, a little before daylight. A few minutes afterwards, some American officers came riding along, intent upon reaching Parras in advance of the main body. Learning the anticipated *amusement*, they stopped to take a part in it, and thus the force of the defenders was increased in number to between twenty and thirty. The Indians were seen soon after daybreak, advancing up the valley. As they came towards the buildings, the Americans sallied out, and commenced a fight, which lasted an hour. The Indians were very strong and muscular, and they kept a constant rocking motion in their saddles, which made it next to impossible to get a good aim at them. They were very expert with their arrows, however, and each party was compelled to fall back once or twice. They were not long in learning, from the number that were dropping from their saddles, that they were exposed to a far more deadly weapon than the Mexican carbine, and to marksmen who knew how to use their weapons.

At last they retreated, carrying most of their dead and wounded away with them, but leaving some dead bodies behind, eighteen captives, and three hundred and fifty stolen cattle. The astonished Mexicans were loud in testifying their gratitude. They were very much alarmed for the safety of Captain Reid, who had received two arrow wounds on the chin, and they examined with curiosity the numerous holes which the arrows had made in the soldiers' clothes.

Nobody but the captain, however, received any injury worth noticing, and he doubtless considers himself amply repaid by one of the proudest trophies ever won by a Christian soldier in war. This is the letter of thanks from the prefect of the department of Parras, addressed to Captain Reid on the 18th of May, 1847, and which has been translated by Mr. Benton as follows:

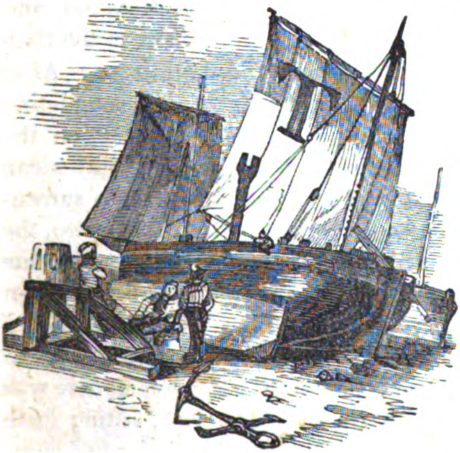
"At the first notice that the barbarians, after killing many, and taking captives, were returning to their haunts, you generously and bravely offered, with fifteen of your subordinates, to fight them on their crossing by the pass of the Paso, executing this enterprise with celerty, address, and bravery, worthy of all eulogy, and worthy of the brilliant issue which all celebrate. You recovered many animals and much plundered property, and eighteen captives were restored to liberty and to social enjoyments, and their souls were overflowing with a lively sentiment of joy and gratitude, which all the inhabitants of this town equally breathe, in favour of their generous deliverers, and their valiant chief. The half of the Indians killed in the combat, and those which fly wounded, do not calm the pain which all feel for the wound which your excellency received in defending Christians and civilized beings against the rage and brutality of savages. All desire the speedy re-establishment of your health; and although they know that in your own noble soul will be found the best reward of your conduct, they desire also to address you the expression of their gratitude and high esteem. I am honoured in being the organ of public sentiment, and pray you to accept it, with the assurance of my most distinguished esteem.

"God and liberty!"

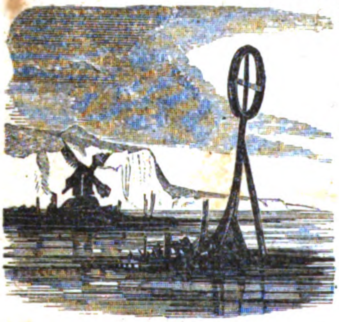
THE army was reviewed by General Wool, at Saltillo, and many endeavours made to induce them to re-enlist, but the thought of "Sarah and the children" was too strong to be overcome by any of the temptations of the gallant general, and they resumed the march homeward. They reported to General Taylor at Monterey, on the 27th of May, and thence they marched to Matamoras, carrying with them their artillery, which General Taylor permitted them to take home as trophies, in consideration of "their gallantry and noble bearing." They made the march from Chihuahua to Matamoras, nine hundred miles, in forty-five days. They arrived at New Orleans about the middle of June, and at St. Louis on the 2d of July, where they received a most glorious welcome. Judge Bowlin received them on the part of the people, a banquet was spread for them, and their popular fellow-citizen, Colonel Benton, made a most thrilling speech to the assembled mass of soldiers and people. He recounted the events of their long and almost fabulous expedition, with a minuteness and accuracy which astonished them. He traced their journey of five thousand miles, from St. Louis and back again. He referred to the famous "Retreat of the Ten Thousand," and congratulated them that the march of the "One Thousand" exceeded that of the "Ten" by some two thousand miles.

"You marched farther than the farthest, fought as well as the best, left order and quiet in your train, and cost less money than any. You arrive here to-day, absent one year, marching and fighting all the time, bringing trophies of cannon and standards from fields whose names where unknown to you before you set out, and only grieving that you could not have gone farther. Ten pieces of cannon rolled out of Chihuahua to arrest your march, now roll through the streets of St. Louis, to grace your triumphal return. Many standards, all pierced with bullets, while waving over the heads of the enemy, at the Sacramento, now wave at the head of your column. The black flag brought to the Bracito, to indicate the refusal of that quarter, which its bearers so soon needed and received, now takes its place among your nobler trophies, and hangs drooping in their presence. To crown the whole, to make public and private happiness go together, to spare the cypress where the laurel hangs in clusters; this long and perilous march, with all its accidents of field and camp, presents an incredibly small list of comrades lost. Almost all return! and the joy of families resounds intermingled with the applauses of the state."

THE importance of taking military possession of California had early engaged the attention of the United States government. Commodore Sloat was directed, in a secret and confidential order from the navy department, in June, 1845, to possess himself of the port of San Francisco, and blockade or occupy such other ports as his force would allow, as soon as he learned, with certainty, of the existence of war between the United States and Mexico. On the 13th of May, 1846, the secretary of the navy wrote to him that the state of things before anticipated, then actually existed, and that he should refer to his former instructions, and carry into effect the orders therein communicated with energy and promptitude. Other communications were despatched, at short intervals, from the department to the distant commodore, the tenor of which was nearly the same as the first one, and may be expressed most clearly in the words of the secretary himself. "The object of the United States has reference to ultimate peace with Mexico; and if, at that peace, the basis of the *uti posseditis* shall be established, the government expects, through your forces, to be found in actual possession of California." On the 13th of August an order was issued from the navy department, addressed to the senior officer in the command on the Pacific, enforcing the execution of the instructions before sent to Commodore Sloat, and giving especial directions for the maintenance of friendly relations with the people. The flag of the United States was to be raised, but the people were to be allowed as much liberty of self-government beneath it as would be consistent with the occupation of the country by the United States. All American vessels and merchandise were to be allowed to come and go free of duty, and on foreign vessels and goods, reasonable duties were to be imposed and collected by the local authorities.

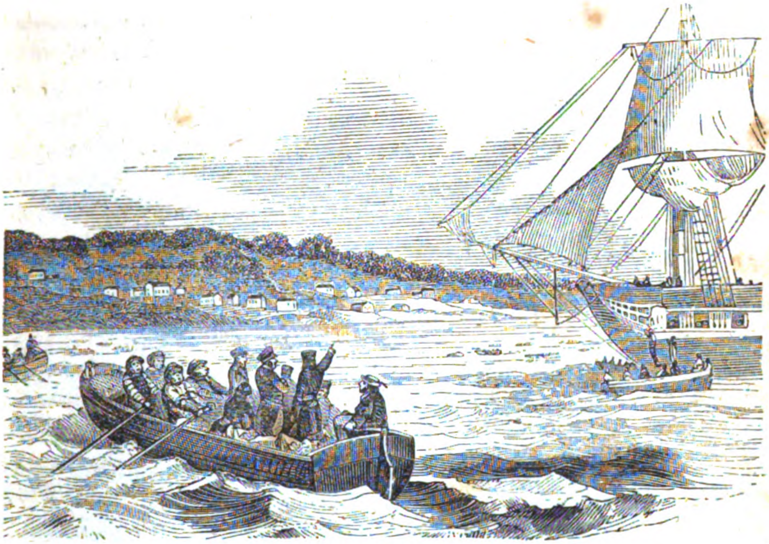


THE naval commander was then informed that a military force had been directed by the secretary of war to proceed to the western coast of California, for the purpose of co-operating with the navy, in taking possession of and holding the ports and positions before designated, and co-operating otherwise in the war. A detachment of these troops, consisting of a company of artillery, under Captain Tompkins, had sailed in the United States ship Lexington, and Colonel Stevenson would soon sail from New York with a regiment of volunteers. General Kearny was expected to reach the coast by the overland route from Santa Fe, and the secretary enjoined the most cordial and effectual co-operation between the officers of the two services, in taking possession of and holding the ports and positions of the enemy designated in the instructions to either or both branches; and announced the intention of the government to hold any commander of either branch to a strict responsibility for any failure to preserve harmony and secure the objects proposed.



OF all these despatches, that of the 13th of May, issued on the day when the war was formally recognized as existing by Congress, was received on the 19th of August, and the others at subsequent dates, though they did not come until after victory had crowned the arms of the gallant Americans, afforded the noble spirits who had achieved the conquest the satisfaction of knowing that they had only anticipated the wishes of the government, and that American officers never do wrong in zealously opposing their country's enemies.

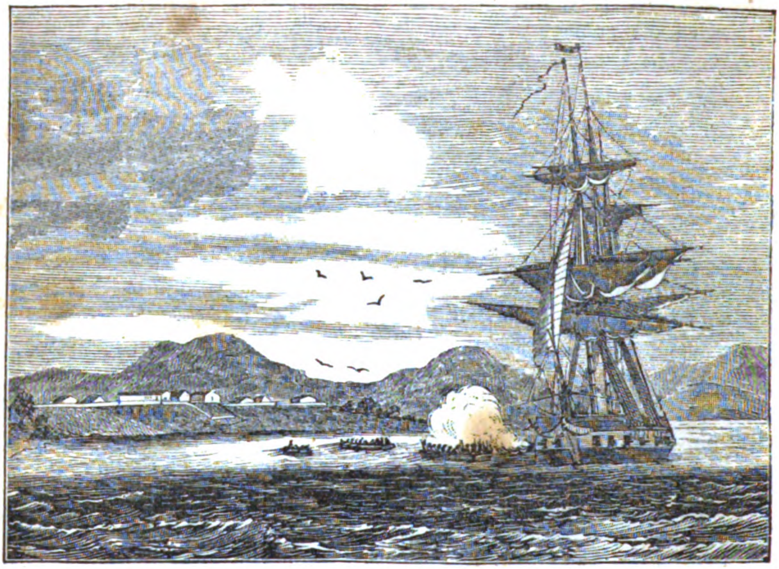
Commodore Sloat received satisfactory information, at Mazatlan on the 7th of June, 1846, that the Mexican troops, six or seven thousand in number, had invaded the territory of the United States, and attacked General Taylor. He was told that the American fleet was blockading the eastern coast, and he immediately entered upon a series of novel and important movements. He left Mazatlan, and sailed to Monterey, which he reached on the 3d of July, in the flagship Savannah. He found there the Cyane and the Levant. After an examination of the defences, &c., of the town, and completing his arrangements for capturing it, he sent Captain Mervine, on the morning of the 7th of July, to demand its surrender. The Mexican commander promptly answered that he was not authorized to surrender the place, and referred Commodore Sloat to Don Jose Castro, the governor of California. It was therefore taken by Captain Mervine and Commander Page, who landed two hundred and fifty seamen and marines, marched to the custom-house, raised the star-spangled banner, amid cheers from the troops and bystanders, and a national salute from the squadron. A proclamation from the commodore was then posted about the town, in English and in Spanish, setting forth that war existed by the act of Mexico, that General Taylor had commenced a career of conquest on the Rio Grande, by defeating a Mexican army of three times his own strength, and that the standard of the United States would be immediately carried throughout California. It announced that, although the commodore came in arms, he came as a friend; that thenceforth California would be a portion of



Capture of Monterey.

the United States, and its peaceable inhabitants would be confirmed in the rights they then enjoyed, and have in addition the superior advantages afforded to the people by the constitution, laws, and resources of the United States, under which they might reasonably hope to advance and improve rapidly, both in agriculture and commerce. Such of the inhabitants as were not disposed to live peaceably under the government of the United States, were to be allowed time to dispose of their property, and to remove out of the country, if they chose, without any restriction, or to remain in it in the observance of strict neutrality. The civil functionaries were desired to retain their offices, and preserve public tranquillity; and the people and clergy were assured of their being unmolested in their property, rights, and possessions. This proclamation was expected to have the more effect, from the strict and praiseworthy adherence to its spirit by the crews of the ships, who did not commit a single irregularity of any kind during the whole time they were on shore.

After taking possession of Monterey, Commodore Sloat summoned Don Jose Castro to surrender every thing under his control and jurisdiction in California, that that country might be spared the horrors of war. He was requested to meet the commodore at Monterey, to arrange terms of capitulation. Not being satisfied of the reasonableness of this request, General Castro replied that he should consult the governor and assembly of the department, and meanwhile should

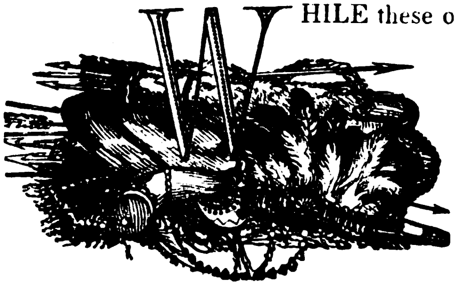


Capture of Yerba Buena.

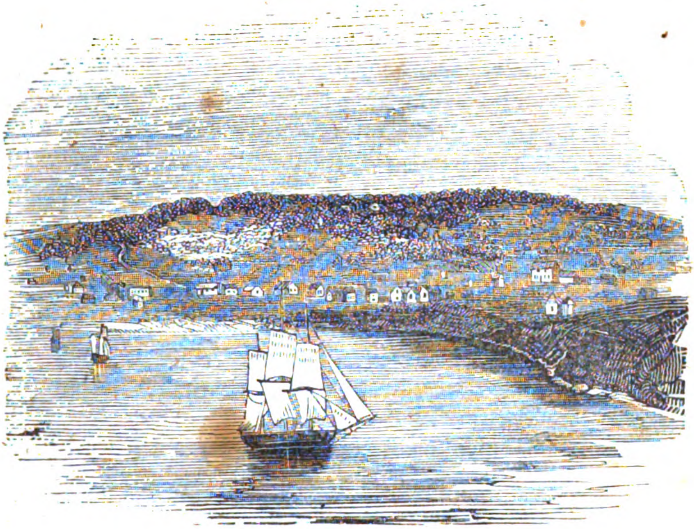
defend the country as long as he could rely upon the faithfulness of a single follower. On the 9th July, Commodore Sloat despatched a letter to Don Pio Pico, the governor at Santa Barbara, informing him of the summons to General Castro to surrender the country, and inviting him to come to Monterey to see for himself the manner in which the people of that place had been treated, the truth of the statement, that though he came in arms, he came as a friend to California. The governor, however, neither came nor answered the invitation.

On the 6th of July, orders were sent by the commodore to Commander J. B. Montgomery, who was at San Francisco with the United States sloop Portsmouth, directing him to hoist the flag of the United States at Yerba Buena, or any other suitable place, take possession in the name of the United States of the fort and adjacent country, and secure the bay of San Francisco. He was also requested to forward a letter to Captain Fremont, to ascertain if he would co-operate in the conquest of the country. These instructions were received by Commander Montgomery on the 8th, and immediately carried out. He landed at Yerba Buena with seventy sailors and marines, hoisted the American flag, addressed the people, and posted the proclamation on the flag-staff. A volunteer force of thirty-two men was then organized from the inhabitants of Yerba Buena, under Lieutenants Missroon and Watson, of the navy. As early as one o'clock on the 8th, Lieutenant Missroon set out with a part of this new force to ascertain the condition of the presidio and fort, and on the same day reported that he had found the presidio abandoned, and the fort in a dilapidated condition. He had displayed the American flag from its ramparts. On the same day, also, Lieutenant Watson started from Yerba Buena to intercept Captain Fremont, who was then on his march from the Sacramento. On the 11th of July, Commander Montgomery informed Commodore Sloat that the flag of the United States was flying at Yerba Buena, at Sutter's Fort, on the Sacramento, at Bodega, on the coast, and at Sonoura; and added, that the protection of person and property, which the American flag promised to California and its inhabitants, seemed to be generally hailed with satisfaction. On the day on which he sent this communication to the commodore, a British vessel of twenty-six guns, the Juno, arrived at San Francisco, and anchored. Captain Montgomery brought all his crew from the shore to the ship, as a preparation for defending his position, in case the English commander should think proper to make any opposition. The "volunteer guards of Yerba Buena" took upon themselves the task of defending the flag of the United States, assuring the commander that it should wave while a single man of their body lived to defend it. Don Francisco Sanchez, the military commander of the district, promptly complied with the requisition of Commander Montgomery, that he should come in and deliver up the arms and public property in his possession. He said that he had no public property, but showed where several guns were buried. Lieutenant Missroon went to the mission of Dolores, but found only a quantity of public documents, which were carefully packed and sealed with the consulate seal, and deposited in the custom-house.

ON the 13th of July, at their own request, Commodore Sloat furnished a flag to the foreigners of the Pueblo of San Jose, a place seventy miles interior from Monterey. He had just completed the organization of a company of thirty-five dragoons, made up of volunteers from the ships and citizens, to reconnoiter the country, and keep open the land communication between the different places held by the Americans. Purser Fauntleroy was appointed to command this body, and Midshipman McLane was appointed first lieutenant. On the 17th, Mr. Fauntleroy reconnoitered as far as the mission of St. Johns, intending to take that place, and recover ten brass guns said to have been buried there by the Mexicans some time previously. On his arrival there, he found the gallant Fremont already in possession, and the two returned together to the commodore at Monterey, setting out on the 19th of July.



WHILE these operations had been performed on the coast, with a precision and determination that would have triumphed over all obstacles, the more fortunate Captain Fremont had been engaged in the achieveme[illegible]f an enterprise which added lasting honours to his already enviable reputation. As assistant and successor to the celebrated Nicollet, he had served in exploring the territories of the far West, suffering amid the snows of the Rocky Mountains the greatest hardships and privations. He drew the attention of the whole country upon himself by his able report of two scientific expeditions which he conducted, one to the Rocky Mountains, in 1842, and the other to Oregon, in 1843–4, and the president conferred upon him the rare honour of advancing him two grades in the army at the same time. He left the seat of government in 1845, to continue his explorations beyond the Rocky Mountains, under orders which confined him wholly to scientific objects. He took no officer or soldier with him; and the whole company which he led consisted only of sixty-two men, engaged by himself as security against the Indians, and for assistants in the duties of his mission. One of the objects proposed to be accomplished by him at this time was the discovery of a new and shorter route across the Rocky Mountains to the mouth of the Columbia, and the search would necessarily cause him to traverse a portion both of the unsettled and the inhabited parts of California. He was aware of the delicate nature of the relations between the United States and Mexico, and his conduct proved him to be the very man for the crisis; wise in matters connected with international law, cautious in his language, and circumspect in his conduct, yet firm and spirited in his bearing when his rights as a man and an American were encroached upon. About the commencement of the year 1846, he approached the settlements in California. Leaving his men on the frontiers, a hundred miles from Monterey, he marched alone to that city, where he found the United States consul,



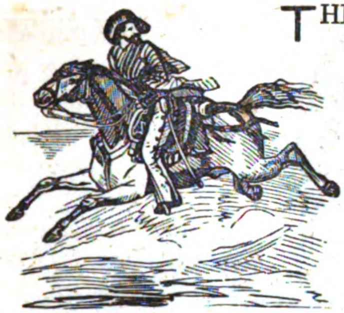
Monterey, Upper California.

T. O. Larkin, Esq., with whom he visited the principal officers of the country. These they informed officially that his expedition was of a scientific character only; that his men were not soldiers; and that he was endeavouring to find the shortest route from the United States to the Pacific ocean. Upon this, Governor Castro complied with his request, that he might be permitted to pass the winter in the valley of San Joaquin, where there was grass for his horses, and game for his men. Captain Fremont then returned to his men, and they moved leisurely towards the place they had designated for recruiting their strength, encamping on the 3d of March on a rancho belonging to Mr. E. P. Hartwell. Here he received letters from Castro and the prefect of the country, ordering him out of it, threatening him that if he remained under any pretext whatever, he would be forcibly ejected.

Determining to abide by the assurances given him in person at Monterey, Captain Fremont did not answer these messages, but told his men to hoist the American flag, as the only protection they had to look to. On the 7th of March, and the three following days, they employed themselves in fortifying their position by creating a breastwork of logs. Their position was on a high hill, whence they could see with their glasses the preparations of the general, in his camp at the mission of St. Johns. On the 9th, Mr. Larkin sent letters to Captain Fremont, informing him of the movements of the Californians, who were preparing to attack him with a large force of artillery, cavalry, and infantry. One of these letters, carried by a Mexican, reached him, and he wrote an answer to the consul which will be preserved in the annals of our history as characteristic of the war and the warriors. "I am making myself as strong as possible," he says, "in the intention that, if we are unjustly attacked, we will fight to extremity, and refuse quarter, trusting to our country to avenge our death. No one has reached our camp, and from the heights we are able to see troops mustering at St. Johns and preparing cannon. I thank you for your kindness and good wishes, and would write more at length as to my intentions, did I not fear my letter would be intercepted. We have in no wise done wrong to the people or the authorities of the country, and if we are hemmed in and assaulted here, we will die, every man of us, under the flag of our country."

The consul, Mr. Larkin, gave a translation of this letter to the alcalde, at his earnest request, and it was immediately sent to the general, who felt no anxiety to press too closely upon men who had unanimously resolved to die before surrendering, and who, he well knew, would not die without a desperate resistance.

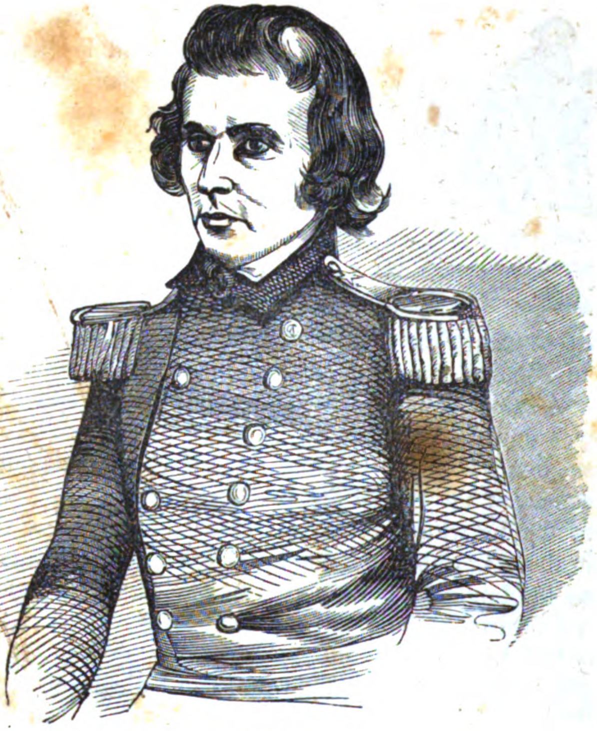
CAPTAIN FREMONT, however, had previously resolved to abandon his mission, and return to the United States, rather than bring about difficulties between his country and Mexico, and now, finding the expected attack delayed, he quietly moved out of his encampment, on the night of the 10th of March. A private letter, written only to inform his lady of his personal concerns, has been made public by subsequent events, and we quote his own modest account of his doings in the valley of Joaquin, as given therein. "The Spaniards were somewhat rude and inhospitable below, and ordered me out of the country, after having given me permission to winter there. My sense of duty did not permit me to fight them, but we retired slowly and growlingly before a force of three or four hundred men and three pieces of artillery. Without the shadow of a cause, the governor suddenly raised the whole country against me, issuing a false and scandalous proclamation. Of course I did not dare to compromise the United States, against which appearances would have been strong; but though it was in my power to increase my party by Americans, I refrained from committing a solitary act of hostility or impropriety."



THE valiant General Castro, finding the gallant little band moving towards Oregon, led his followers into their camp, where he found the staff used for the flag, some tent poles, some old clothes, and two old pack saddles, all thrown away, because they were useless. He magnified these into munitions of war, and stated that he had received various messages from Captain Fremont, threatening to exterminate the Californians. Mr. Larkin could not get him to name any one of the messengers. A lying proclamation was posted in the billiard-room at Monterey, a day or two afterwards, in which the general informed the inhabitants that a band of "bandoleros," (highwaymen,) under Captain Fremont, of the United States army, had come into his department, but that he with two hundred patriots had driven them out, and sent them into the back country. Some of these patriots soon after came to Monterey, and reported that the cowards had run, and that they had driven them into the Sacramento river; others said that they had driven them into the bulrushes on the plains of the Sacramento, and that in their flight they had left some of their horses behind them.

The truth of the matter was, that Captain Fremont retired "growlingly" before them, marching only from four to six miles a day, and the affair of the horses was another instance of his scrupulous care to avoid compromising his government in any way. Several of the horses of the Californians had strayed into his camp in the night, and he had left them there in the morning when he went away, that they might not be able to accuse him of carrying them off. During the whole "pursuit," these patriots took good care not to approach too near to the little party, whose love for their commander, and confidence in his superior judgment, alone restrained them from an attack upon the party that followed. At the middle of May, Captain Fremont had arrived at the great Tlamath lake, in the Oregon territory. He intended to return to the United States by the Columbia and Missouri, through the northern pass in the Rocky Mountains, but he found his progress stopped by bands of hostile Indians, who had been excited against him by Castro, and who had already killed and wounded five of his men.

We quote from an able memorial of Christopher Carson, whose exploits in the service of Captain Fremont have made him deservedly famous and popular, an account of the warfare with the Tlamath In-

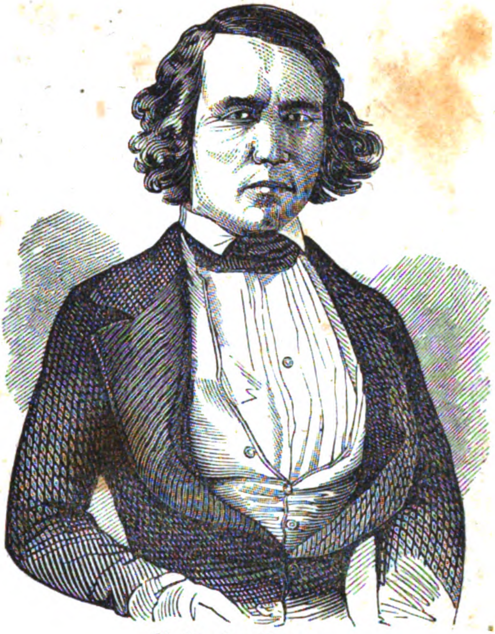


Colonel Fremont.

dians, as a specimen of the incidents frequently met with by these indefatigable explorers.

A courier having overtaken Captain Fremont at Tlamath lake, to say that Mr. Gillespie and five men were endeavouring to overtake him, he took ten men and returned sixty miles with the courier, making all haste, in order to reach them before night, and prevent any attack which the Indians might be tempted to make on a small party. These Tlamath Indians, by nature brave and warlike, have now a new source of power in the iron arrow heads and axes furnished them by the British posts in that country. Their arrows can only be extracted from the flesh by the knife, as they are barbed, and of course not to be drawn out. The events of that night, and the days following, illustrate so fully the nightly danger of an Indian country, that I will give them in Carson's own words:

"Mr. Gillespie had brought the colonel letters from home, the first he had had since leaving the States the year before—and he was up, and kept a large fire burning till after midnight; the rest of us were tired out, and all went to sleep. This was the only night in all our



Christopher Carson.

travels, except the one night on the island in the Salt lake, that we failed to keep guard; and as the men were so tired, and we expected no attack, now that we had sixteen in the party, the colonel didn't like to ask it of them; but sat up late himself. Owens and I were sleeping together, and we were waked at the same time by the licks of the axe that killed our men. At first I didn't know it was that; but I called to Basil, who was that side—'What's the matter there? what's that fuss about?'—he never answered, for he was dead, then, poor fellow, and he never knew what killed him—his head had been cut in, in his sleep; the other groaned a little as he died. The Delawares (we had four with us) were sleeping at that fire, and they sprang up as the Tlamaths charged them. One of them caught up a gun which was unloaded; but, although he could do no execution, he kept them at bay, fighting like a soldier, and didn't give up until he was shot full of arrows—three entering his heart; he died bravely. As soon as I had called out, I saw it was Indians in the camp, and I and Owens together cried out 'Indians.' There were no orders given; things went on too fast, and the colonel had men with him that didn't need to be told their duty. The colonel and I, Maxwell, Owens, Godey, and Stepp, jumped together, we six, and ran to the assistance of our Delawares. I don't know who fired and who didn't:

but I think it was Stepp's shot that killed the Tlamath chief; for it was at the crack of Stepp's gun that he fell. He had an English half axe strung to his wrist by a cord, and there were forty arrows left in his quiver—the most beautiful and warlike arrows I ever saw. He must have been the bravest man among them, from the way he was armed, and judging by his cap. When the Tlamaths saw him fall, they ran, but we lay, every man with his rifle cocked, until daylight, expecting another attack.

IN the morning, we found by the tracks that from fifteen to twenty of the Tlamaths had attacked us. They had killed three of our men, and wounded one of the Delawares, who scalped the chief, whom we left where he fell. Our dead w[illegible]ied on mules; but, after going a[illegible]ten miles, we found it impossible to get them any farther through the thick timber, and, finding a secret place, we buried them under logs and chunks, having no way to dig a grave. It was only a few days before this fight, that some of these same Indians had come into our camp; and, although we had only meat for two days, and felt sure that we should have to eat mules for ten or fifteen days to come, the colonel divided with them, and even had a mule unpacked, to give them some tobacco and knives."

The party then retraced its way into California, and two days after this rencounter, they met a large village of Tlamaths—more than a hundred warriors. Carson was in advance with ten men, but one of them having been discovered, he could not follow his orders, which were to send back word, and let Fremont come up in case they found Indians. But as they had been seen, it only remained to charge the village, which they did, killing many, and putting the rest to flight. "The women and children," Carson says, "we didn't interfere with; but they burnt the village, together with their canoes and fishing nets." In a subsequent encounter the same day, Carson's life was imminently exposed. As they galloped up, he was rather in advance when he observed an Indian fixing his arrow to let fly at him. Carson levelled his rifle, but it snapped, and in an instant the arrow would have pierced him, had not Fremont, seeing the danger, dashed his horse on the Indian, and knocked him down. "I owe my life to them two," says Carson—"the colonel and Sacramento saved me."

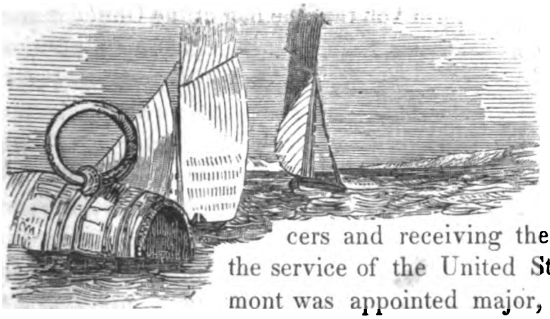
THE name Sacramento, is that of a noble Californian horse which Captain Sutter gave to Colonel Fremont in 1844, and which has twice made the distance between Kentucky and his native valley, where he earned his name by swimming the river after which he is called, at the close of a long day's journey. Notwithstanding all his hardships, for he has travelled every where with his master, he is still the favourite horse of Colonel Fremont.

Besides these Indians, Captain Fremont had mountains in front on which the snow was still falling, and which made the climate of the region near them as cold as in midwinter. In the rear, on the north bank of the San Francisco Bay, General Castro was assembling troops with the avowed object of attacking the party of Captain Fremont and all the American settlers, because, he alleged, the captain had come for the purpose of inciting the settlers to revolt. He remained for some days deliberating upon the difficulties of his situation, suffering with his men and horses, from cold, fatigue, and famine. The result of his deliberations was a determination to turn upon his pursuers and fight them, although they numbered ten times his force, and to seek to secure himself and the American settlers by overturning the existing government.

Having fixed upon the proper course, Captain Fremont pursued it with a vigour that excited the most lively feelings of astonishment and terror in the minds of General Castro and his patriots. On the 11th of June, he struck the first blow. At daylight on that day, he surprised an officer and fourteen men on the way to the Mexican camp, with two hundred horses for Castro's army. The horses were retained, and the officer and the men released. At daybreak on the 15th, the military rendezvous and intended head-quarters was surprised by the Americans, who captured there nine pieces of brass cannon, two hundred and fifty muskets, and other arms and ammunition, a general, a colonel, a captain, and other officers. Captain Fremont left a party of fourteen men here as a garrison, and repaired to the Rio de los Americanos to obtain aid from the American settlers. An express came after him from Sonoma, with information of the approach of a large force under General Castro. He therefore set out on the afternoon of the 23d of June, with a force of ninety mounted men, armed with rifles, and travelled day and night. He reached Sonoma, after marching eighty miles, at two o'clock on the morning of the 25th. A squadron of seventy dragoons, under De la Torre, the vanguard of Castro's force, crossed the bay, and was attacked and defeated by a party of twenty Americans, with the loss of two men killed and several wounded. Two of Captain Fremont's men going on an express were taken by De la Torre, and cut to pieces alive with knives. The Americans retaliated, by instantly shooting three of the party of De la Torre, whom they captured. Having cleared the north side of the Bay of San Francisco of the enemy, Captain Fremont called the Americans together at Sonoma, addressed them upon the dangers of their situation, and recommended as their only means of safety, a declaration of independence and war upon Castro and his troops. The independence was proclaimed immediately, July 4th, 1846, and the war followed. A few days afterwards, they heard of the taking of Monterey by Commodore Sloat, and the existence of the war; the American flag was promptly substituted for that of the Californian revolutionists. Castro fled south at the head of four or five hundred men, and Captain Fremont, leaving some fifty men in garrisons, pursued him with a hundred and sixty riflemen. It was at this stage of his proceedings that he met Mr. Fauntleroy, and received Commodore Sloat's request that he would come to Monterey.

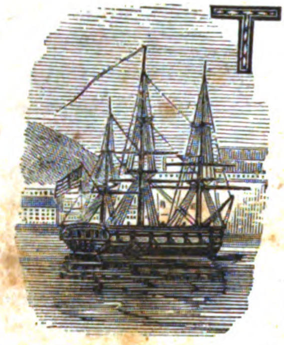
Commodore Stockton had arrived at that place on the afternoon of the 15th of July, 1846, and reported for duty to Commodore Sloat, who soon afterwards resigned the chief command to him, and sailed for home, to recruit his health, which had been enfeebled by arduous services. He arrived at the seat of government in November, 1846, having come by the way of Panama. "This gallant and meritorious officer" was highly applauded for his course by the department, having observed the line of conduct prescribed by his instructions "with such intelligence and fidelity, that no complaint has ever been made of any unauthorized aggression on his part."

It has been matter of poignant regret to the gallant officers and men of our navy, that while the army has been gaining such numerous and imperishable laurels in the recent war, so few opportunities have been afforded for assailing the enemy by ships and steamers. Wherever there has been an opportunity for gaining distinction, and signalizing the honour of our naval flag, it has always been eagerly embraced; and we shall see in the sequel of this California affair, that the sailors and their officers performed a very distinguished part in the drama of the conquest.



ON the day after taking command, Commodore Stockton organized the "California battalion of mounted riflemen," by appointing all the necessary officers and receiving them as volunteers into the service of the United States. Captain Fremont was appointed major, and Lieutenant Gillespie, captain of the battalion. Major Fremont sailed with his battalion, in the United States ship Cyane, for San Diego, in the hope of getting between the Colorado and General Castro, and cutting off his retreat. He arrived at San Diego on the 29th of July, but was detained there by the difficulty of finding horses, the Californians having driven off nearly all their animals. Major Fremont was not able to move until the 8th of August, when he started in pursuit of Castro. Commodore Stockton meanwhile had sailed to San Pedro, where he landed about three hundred and sixty men from the frigate Congress, and commenced a march towards the "camp of the Mesa," a fortified position held by General Castro, three miles from Cuidad de los Angeles, the City of the Angels, and the capital of the Californias. When the gallant sailor-army had arrived within twelve miles of the camp of the Meza, General Castro abandoned it and fled. His force separated into small parties, and ran away in all directions. Major Fremont joined the commodore on the 13th of August, with eighty mounted riflemen, and the united forces entered the City of the Angels, and took possession of the government house. On the 16th, Major Fremont again set off in pursuit of Castro, but it was soon found that the patriot chieftain had made good his escape towards the city of Mexico. Most of his officers, however, were captured and brought to the City of the Angels, where Commodore Stockton had been busy in posting a proclamation and establishing a civil government.

On the 22d of August, elections were ordered to be held on the 15th of September, when Walter Colton, the chaplain of the frigate Congress, was chosen alcalde of Monterey. He had already established a newspaper there, called the Californian, which had been preceded by the publication at Yerba Buena of the California Star.

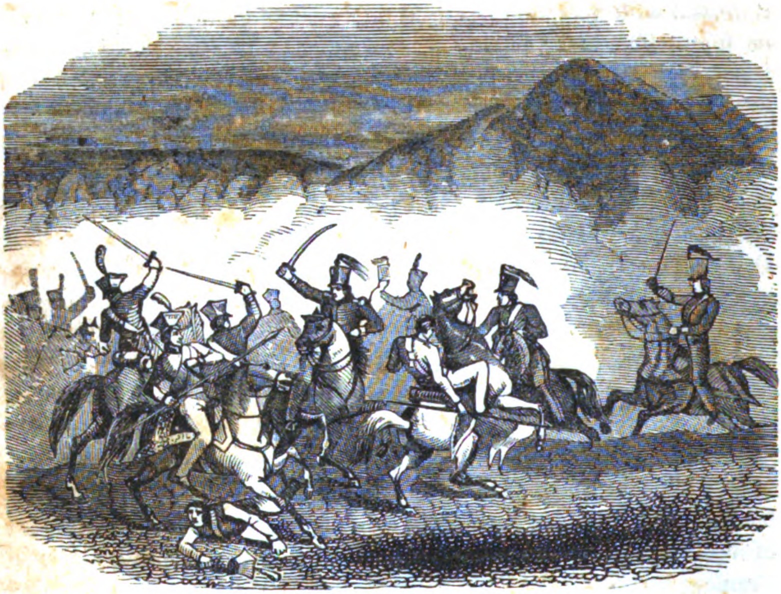


THE despatch of Commodore Stockton to the navy department, on the 28th of August, 1846, says:—"I have now the honour to inform you that the flag of the United States is flying from every commanding position in the territory of California, and that this rich and beautiful country belongs to the United States, and is for ever free from Mexican dominion." The gallant commodore, however, announced the conquest somewhat in advance. Difficulties were yet to be encountered, and exploits achieved before the country would be quietly in possession of its new masters. Commodore Stockton directed Major Fremont to increase his force to three hundred men, and to station fifty at the City of the Angels, under Captain Gillespie, fifty at Monterey, fifty at San Francisco, twenty-five at Santa Barbara, and to keep the others together for service, wherever they might be required, that the commodore might himself be able to "leave the desk and the camp, and take to the ship and to the sea." He then embarked for San Francisco, and Major Fremont, making a temporary distribution of his forces, set out to recruit his strength, according to the commodore's order. He took but forty men with him, and nine of these, with the boyish Lieutenant Talbot, (the Colonel Croghan of the Mexican war,) he left at Santa Barbara.

On the 23d of September, the City of the Angels was invested by an army of Californians, whose overwhelming numbers caused Captain Gillespie to surrender that place. He returned with his thirty riflemen to San Pedro, and there embarked for Monterey. The Californian chief, Manuel Gaspar, then led two hundred of his men against Santa Barbara, where they were braved by Lieutenant Talbot and his insignificant force for ten days. This youthful commander, who had won the esteem and confidence of Colonel Fremont, in his former expeditions, now proved himself worthy of holding the post of danger. He held the town until he was completely besieged, and then refusing to surrender, forced his way through the enemy to the mountains in the vicinity, where he remained eight days, suffering from cold and hunger. The enemy made several attempts to induce him to surrender, which he rejected. One detachment of forty men advanced to take him, but was driven back. They then offered to permit him to retire if he would promise neutrality during the war, but he told them that he preferred to fight. At length finding that neither force nor persuasion would cause him to leave his position, they set fire to the grass and brush around him and burned him out. He then retreated with his nine men to Monterey, five hundred miles, mostly on foot. The brave fellows were welcomed as from the grave, the fears of their companions that they were slain having been confirmed by a report of the Californians to that effect. Colonel Fremont had made an attempt to go from San Francisco to the relief of Captain Gillespie, but after being at sea twenty-nine days, he was compelled to put back to Monterey by bad weather. A day or two after the arrival of Lieutenant Talbot, a party of fifty-seven Americans, under Captains Burrows and Thompson, were attacked by the Californians, eighty in number. Captain Burrows and three Americans were slain. Three of the enemy also fell, but they kept the Americans shut up at the mission of St. Johns, until Major Fremont marched to their assistance. The whole party left St. Johns on the 26th of November, and arrived at San Fernando on the 11th of January.

While these events were passing in California, General Kearny was on his march thither from Santa Fe. On the 6th of October, he met Carson, with fifteen men, coming as an express from the City of the Angels, with an account of the conquest of that country by Fremont and Stockton. With the devotion to the public service for which he has always been characterized, he complied with the request of General Kearny to allow some one else to take his depatches to Washington, and, giving up his hopes of seeing his family, he turned his face again towards the Pacific as a guide. General Kearny then sent back a part of his forces and continued his march with one hundred men, well equipped. On the 15th of October, they left the Rio Grande, and commenced the march across the mountains.

On the 5th of December, they were met by a small party of volunteers, under Captain Gillespie, who had come from San Diego for the purpose of giving them information concerning the state of the country. Captain Gillespie informed them that there was an armed party of Californians, with a number of extra horses, encamped at San Pasqual, three leagues distant. General Kearny determined to march upon them, in the double hope of gaining a victory and a remount for his poor soldiers, who had completely worn out their animals in the march from Santa Fe, one thousand and fifty miles. Captain Johnston led the advanced guard of twelve dragoons, mounted on the best horses in the company, then came twenty volunteers, under Captains Gibson and Gillespie, and in the rear two mountain howitzers, with dragoons to manage them, mounted on sorry mules. The rest of the army were ordered to follow on the trail of this detachment with the baggage. At daybreak on the 6th of December, they encountered the enemy, who was already in the saddle. Captain Johnston made a furious charge upon them, with the advance

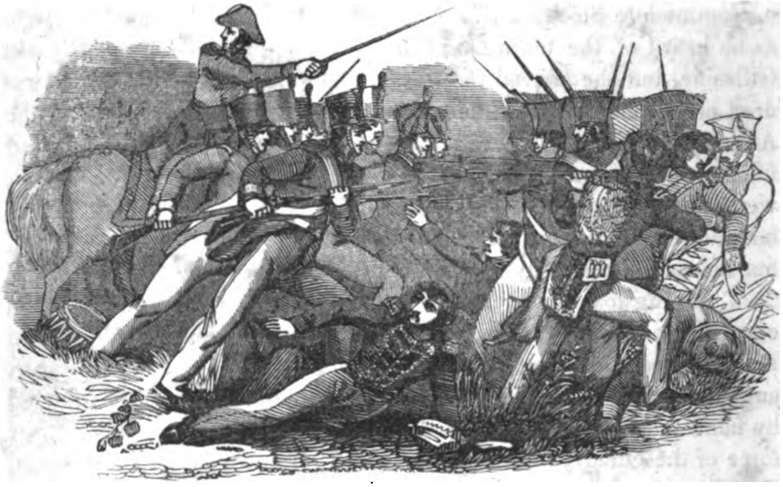


Battle of San Pasqual.

guard, and was well supported by the dragoons. He fell almost in the very beginning of the fight, but the action did not flag, and the enemy were forced to retreat. Captain Moore led off rapidly in pursuit, but the mules of the dragoons could not keep up with his horses, and the enemy seeing the break in the line renewed the fight, and charged with the lance. They fought well, and their superiority of numbers had well nigh proved fatal to the little band; but the dragoons came up and they finally fled from the field, carrying off most of their dead with them. They had kept up a constant fire in the first part of the fight, and used their lances with great dexterity at its close, and the American loss was heavy. Captain Johnston, Captain Moore, Lieutenant Hammond, two serjeants, two corporals, eleven privates, and a man attached to the topographical department were slain. General Kearny was wounded in two places, Captain Gillespie had three wounds, Lieutenant Warner, of the topographical engineers, three, and Captain Gibson and eleven others were also wounded, most of them having from two to ten wounds from lances. The howitzers were not brought into action until near its close, when the mules attached to one of them got alarmed, broke from their drivers, and ran away with it, directly into the enemy's lines. The severe wounds of the soldiers caused a halt in the march until the 10th of December, when the march was resumed, and on the 12th the army reached San Diego.

Commodore Stockton had sent down the frigate Savannah, as soon as he heard of the outbreak of the Californians, to relieve Captain Gillespie, but she arrived too late. The crew, numbering three hundred and twenty men, landed and marched towards the City of the Angels. Half way between the San Pedro and Los Angeles, and fifteen miles from the ship, they met the Californians in numbers, well appointed, with fine horses and artillery. The gallant sailors maintained an action for some time with their small arms, on foot, but it was useless to fly at such a disadvantage, and they finally retired, having lost eleven in killed and wounded. Captain Stockton came down himself to San Pedro in the Congress, and marched upon Los Angeles with a sailor-army, which profited by previous errors, and took some of the ship's cannons with them. These they dragged by hand with ropes. At the Rancho Sepulvida they met a large force of the enemy, which Captain Stockton decoyed, by a stratagem, into a position near to his main body, formed into a triangle, with the guns hidden by the men. As soon as they were in a proper place, he extended his wings, and opened upon them with the artillery. More than a hundred were killed, a still larger number wounded, a hundred taken prisoners, and the whole army put to flight in disorder. Mounted on horses, while the sailors were on foot, the enemy had had, hitherto, the advantage of choosing his own time, place, and distance of attack, but the means of transportation were placed, by this victory, in the hands of the sailors themselves, and as soon as they could thus meet the enemy, they commenced a series of skirmishes, in which they displayed the utmost courage and activity.

THE arrival of General Kearny at San Diego, was opportune; and Commodore Stockton and he now laid a plan for putting an end to the war. On the 29th of December, the little army, composed of sixty dismounted dragoons, fifty California volunteers, and about four hundred marines and sailors, started from San Diego to march to Los Angeles. They had proceeded a hundred and ten miles to the Rio San Gabriel, when they met the enemy in a strong position, with six hundred mounted men and four pieces of artillery, prepared to dispute the passage of the river. January 8, 1847, the necessary preparations for a battle having been made, the Americans waded through the water under a galling fire, dragging their guns after them, and reserving their fire until they reached the opposite bank. Here they repelled a charge of the



Battle of San Gabriel.

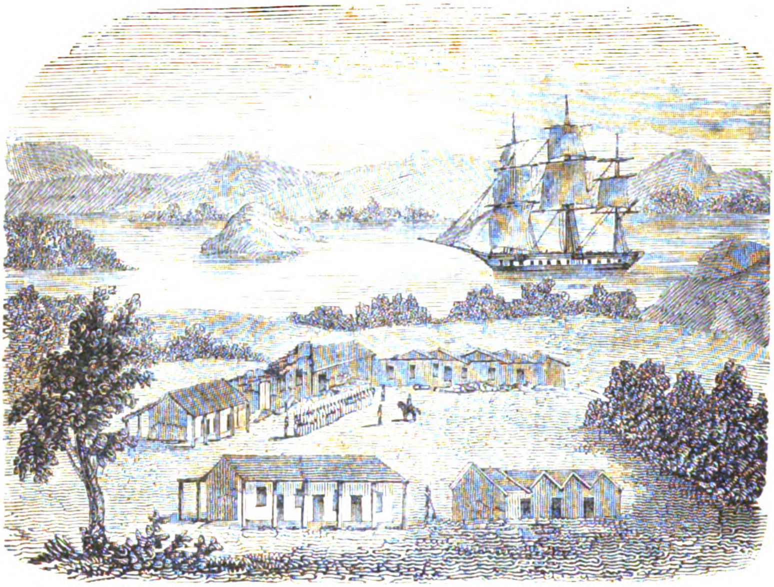
enemy, and then charged up the bank in the most gallant manner, and succeeded, after fighting an hour and a half, in driving the enemy from the field. The Americans encamped there over night, and on the next morning resumed their march. On the plains of the Mesa the enemy made another effort to save their capital. They were concealed in a ravine, with their artillery, until the Americans came almost within gunshot, when they opened a brisk fire with their field-pieces upon the right flank, and at the same time charged both on the front and rear. They fell back as the Americans advanced, and finally retired, after concentrating their forces, and making one more charge on the left flank. In the afternoon the army reached the banks of the Mesa, and encamped three miles below Los Angeles. On the 10th they entered the city without opposition. The loss in these two battles was very slight, one private being killed, and Captain Gillespie, Lieutenant Rowand, of the navy, and eleven privates wounded. The enemy carried off their dead and wounded, so that the extent of their loss is unknown. General Kearny says that it must have been considerable, and Commodore Stockton estimates it at between seventy and eighty.

Two or three days previously to the battle of the 8th of January, Jose Maria Flores, the commander of the Californians, had sent two commissioners to Captain Stockton, with proposals for making a treaty of peace. The commodore replied that he could not recognize Flores, who had broken his parole, as an honourable man, or as one having any rightful authority, or worthy to be treated with; that he was a rebel in arms, and that if he caught him he would have him shot. After losing the battles of the 8th and 9th, they met Colonel Fremont on his way to Cuidad de los Angeles. Jose Maria Flores had fled, leaving the command to Don Andres Pico, who made propositions of surrendering his forces to Colonel Fremont, which the latter, being ignorant of the occurrences of the few days previous, agreed to accept. The articles of capitulation were signed on the 13th of January. The terms did not treat the Californians either as rebels or citizens of the United States, and did not exact oaths of allegiance until a definitive treaty of peace should be made between Mexico and the United States. Present obedience to the American authorities was required, and the occurrences of the past were forgotten. Commodore Stockton approved of this agreement, though he was sorry to have lost the opportunity of punishing the officers for breaking their parole. The territory again became quiet.

Colonel Fremont joined the forces of Kearny and Stockton at Los Angeles on the 15th. Here the misunderstanding arose between General Kearny and Commodore Stockton, as to their relative prerogatives, which, in the end, lost to the country the valuable services of one of the most talented and enterprising of her military officers. Commodore Stockton had been deeply impressed with the bravery, activity, and zeal displayed by Colonel Fremont in the conquest of the country. Without men or money, he had succeeded, by his untiring personal efforts, in raising from the widely scattered little settlements a force of four hundred and fifty men, well mounted, and supplied with every equipment of war. They formed one of the most curious collections of men ever found in one army. There were representatives from almost every nation of the civilized world, and Indians from many different tribes of North America, all speaking different tongues; yet he had succeeded in disciplining them into a very efficient corps, and had led them with constant success wherever they were needed, although he had always a force of Californians hovering around his flanks, watching to take advantage of the first false move, or the least decline of vigilance.

In return for his services, before leaving the coast, Commodore Stockton appointed him governor of California.

In January, 1847, Commodore Shubrick arrived at Monterey, and assumed the command of the naval forces on that station. Lieutenant-Colonel Cooke joined General Kearny at San Diego with the the Mormon battalion, in fine order, good health, and high spirits. They were posted at the mission of San Luis Rey, to prevent any reinforcements of troops entering California from the department of Sonora. General Kearny sailed to Monterey. Captain Tompkins arrived early in February, with his company of United States artil-



Presidio of San Francisco. Encampment of the New York Volunteers.

lery, and was stationed at Monterey, and on the 6th of March, Colonel Stevenson arrived, with two hundred and fifty of the New York California volunteers at San Francisco. The remainder of his regiment arrived soon after. He was soon afterwards ordered to occupy Monterey with four companies, and Lieutenant-Colonel Burton, with three companies, took post at Santa Barbara. The emigrants who had formed the California battalion were discharged, and began to establish themselves. New settlements were made in all directions. On the 16th of July, 1847, the time of service of the Mormon battalion expired, when the military force of the country consisted of Colonel Stevenson's regiment, one company of dragoons, and one of light artillery. This army, with the co-operation of the navy, has proved amply sufficient to preserve order in the country, from which the most cheering accounts are continually arriving. The last act of General Kearny was to order Lieutenant-Colonel Burton to sail to La Paz, in Lower California, and take possession of that country. The occupation of the province was made without much difficulty, but when the fleet left the Gulf of California, to avoid the severity of the winter months, the people rose upon the several garrisons, and a number of minor battles and sieges occurred, the particulars of which have not been received in any authentic form. The Americans generally maintained their positions, and in defending them evinced a high-toned bravery and determination which would have won for them unfading laurels on a more exten Colonel Burton gained a brilliant victory at La dred of the enemy, killing and wounding fifty of the loss of only three men. The defence of S southern port of California, was very creditable. Soi soldiers, and twenty California volunteers, under Lieu wood, having been surrounded and besieged for thirty days b four hundred of the enemy, they maintained their post, despite thirst and famine, and the vigorous assaults of the Californians, until they were relieved by the arrival of the United States ship Cyane, the crew of which landed and put the enemy to flight. A series of small fights and skirmishes also took place on the Pacific coast of Mexico. The town of Guaymas was bombarded in October, 1847, by the Congress and the Portsmouth, the garrison, of eight hundred men, driven out, and the town taken. Commander Selfridge, of the United States sloop Dale, landed near Sinaloa, with eighty-eight men, and routed a force of four hundred of the enemy, killing and wounding forty of their number.

In February, 1847, General Kearny had received instructions, issued from the war department in the preceding year, and, in consequence, assumed the direction of operations on the land, and the administrative functions of government over the people and territory of California. A proclamation announcing this fact was issued by him and Commodore Shubrick, on the 1st of March, 1847. As soon as Colonel Fremont was apprized of this action, he started, on the 21st of March, from Los Angeles, attended by a coloured man and two Californian gentlemen, Don Andres Pico, and his brother, Don Jesus Pico. Both of these owed their lives to Colonel Fremont; he having granted that of the first in the capitulation of the 13th of January, and pardoned the other, at the solicitation of his wife and children, and friends, when he was taken and condemned to death, in December, 1846, for having broken his parole.*

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* The scene between the colonel and the friends of the criminal, is described as extremely affecting. His heart had nothing in it which could withstand the accents of grief, and the outpourings of joy and gratitude when he pronounced the words of pardon, almost equally overpowered him. Don Jesus had been calm, composed, and quiet, while undergoing his trial and sentence, but when he was told of his restoration to life and liberty, his ardent feelings burst through his natural reserve; he threw himself at the colonel's feet, swore eternal fidelity to him, and demanded the privilege of going with him and dying for him. Colonel Fremont had much difficulty in reconciling his own men to the release of the prisoner, but the faithfulness of Don Jesus to his preserver and the Americans, and the quiet which has since reigned in the country, prove that, in obeying the dictates of mercy and humanity, Colonel Fremont followed a course which the ablest policy would have dictated. The words of pardon were given by Fremont himself, a circumstance which heightened the interest of the scene, and contributed in no little degree to strengthen the subsequent friendship between the two chieftains.

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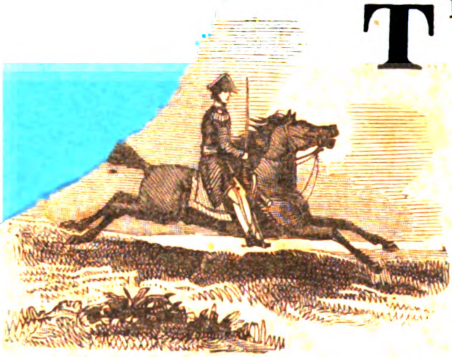
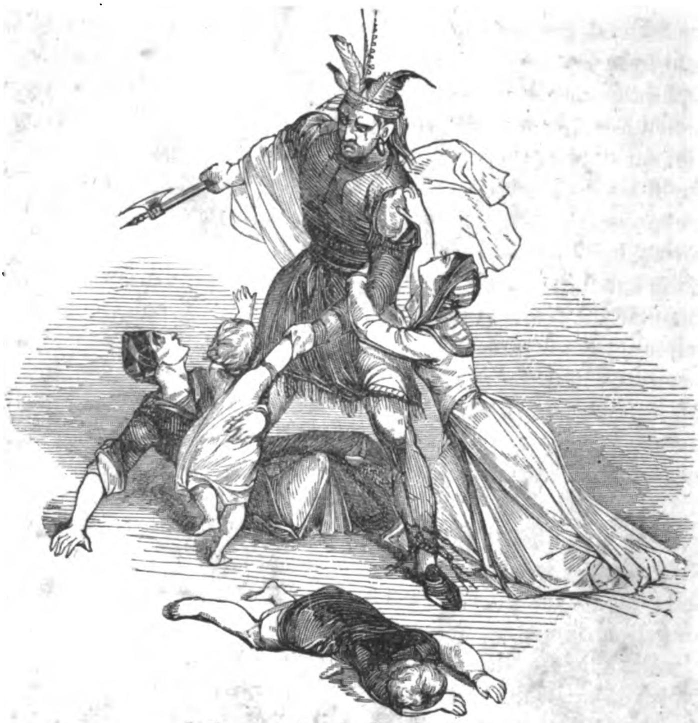


THE ride of Colonel Fremont to Monterey and return to Los Angeles, a journey of more than eight hundred miles, was performed in eight days, including two days' detention, and all stoppages. Their speed was at the rate of one hundred and twenty-five miles daily, showing the extraordinary powers of the Californian horses.

Colonel Fremont, when informed of the commission from the government as commander-in-chief, and of the orders with which General Kearny arrived in California, declined to obey his military orders, and continued to act as "governor and commander-in-chief of California," under the appointment of Commodore Stockton, on the ground that the authority conferred on General Kearny had become obsolete by the force of events, not looked to by the government as to happen until after the arrival of General Kearny in the territory. The principal of these was the conquest of California, which, he alleged, had been achieved by Commodore Stockton and himself, before the arrival of General Kearny and the troops under his command. At the end of May, General Kearny left the country to return home, having appointed Colonel Mason governor of California. Colonel Fremont accompanied him, bringing back his original engineering party. They reached Fort Leavenworth in sixty-six days, their march for the last fifty-seven days averaging thirty-one miles daily. At Fort Leavenworth, formal charges (of mutiny, disobedience of lawful commands of his superior officer, and conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline) were preferred by General Kearny against Colonel Fremont, who asked for a speedy trial. He was subsequently tried in Washington, before a court-martial, which found him guilty of all the charges. With reference to the peculiar circumstances in which he had been placed, "between two officers of superior rank, each claiming to command-in-chief in California, circumstances in their nature calculated to embarrass the mind and excite the doubts of officers of greater experience than the accused, and in consideration of the important professional services rendered by him previous to the occurrence of the acts for which he was tried," the officers of the court recommended him to executive clemency. The president was of opinion that the charge of mutiny was not sustained, but approved the sentence of the court, which was "dismissal from the service," on the ground of the accused being guilty of the other two charges. He however remitted the sentence, and directed Lieutenant-Colonel Fremont to be released from arrest and report for duty. He was ordered to join the rifle regiment, of which he held his commission as lieutenant-colonel, in Mexico, but he was not conscious of having done any thing to merit the finding of the court against him, and he would not seem to admit its justice by accepting executive clemency. He therefore resigned his commission.

Soon after the departure of Colonel Doniphan for Chihuahua, an insurrection broke out in the northern part of New Mexico, which appeared to have for its object the massacre of all American residents, and such of the Mexicans as had taken office under the government established by General Kearny. A conspiracy was first formed under a number of prominent Mexicans, headed by Thomas Ortiz and Diego Archaleta. The postponement of their scheme from the time first fixed for its accomplishment led to its discovery, and its leaders fled. Their doctrines, however, continued to be disseminated among the people, and gave anxiety to the authorities. Governor Bent issued an ably written proclamation on the 5th of January, calculated to do away with the false impressions which had been made upon the minds of the people by their infatuated leaders, and exhorting them to remain quiet and enjoy the protection and security offered them. This paper seemed to have had the desired effect, and confiding in the apparent tranquillity, the governor went to Taos, unattended, on some private business. On the 19th of January, a party of Pueblo Indians came to the village, demanding the release of two of their comrades, who were confined in prison for crime. Stephen L. Lee, the sheriff, was about to give them up, when Vigil, the Mexican prefect, forebade it. The Indians then killed both Vigil and Lee, and released the prisoners. Then being joined by the Mexicans, they marched towards the house of Governor Bent, but being informed of their approach, he rose from his bed, dressed himself, and seized his pistols. A woman in the house advised him to fight, but he said it was useless to oppose such a crowd of savages, and he would endeavour to get assistance or escape. There was a window opening from his house into that of another, through which he was passing, when he received two arrows from the Indians, who had covered the house-tops. He made his way to the door and asked assistance from some of the persons present, but they refused to aid him, telling him he must die. The Indians by this time had obtained an entrance into the house, and they shot him through the body and killed him. One Tomas then took the governor's pistol



Indian Atrocities in New Mexico.

and shot him in the face. They then scalped him, stretched his body on a board with brass nails, and paraded it through the streets. The district attorney, Mr. Leal, they treated in a more brutal manner, scalping him alive, and killing him by shooting arrows into his body a little way at a time. Two others fell victims to their barbarity. They then sent messengers all over the country, informing the people that a blow had been struck, and inviting their aid in prosecuting the revolt. On the same day, several Americans were murdered at the Arroyo Honda, and two others on the Rio Colorado.*

Colonel Price heard of these events on the 20th of January, and at the same time learned that the insurgents had collected an army and were advancing to fight him. He prepared an expedition against them, and met them on the 24th of January, with a force of three hundred and fifty-three rank and file, and four howitzers. The Mexicans were about fifteen hundred strong, in the valley bordering the Rio del Norte, in possession of the heights commanding the road to Canada. They saw that the train of Colonel Price's command was some distance in the rear, and attempted to cut it off. In this they were foiled, and the battle was regularly commenced. In a few minutes they were dislodged from every one of their positions, and flying in all directions. Colonel Price lost two killed and six wounded. The enemy left thirty-six dead on the field, and carried off their wounded. The enemy retreated so rapidly that they could not be overtaken. On the 29th of January, Colonel Price learned that some sixty or eighty of them were posted on the gorge leading to Embudo, and he despatched Captain Burgwin, with one hundred and eighty men, to fight them. The road to be travelled would not admit of the passage of artillery or baggage wagons.

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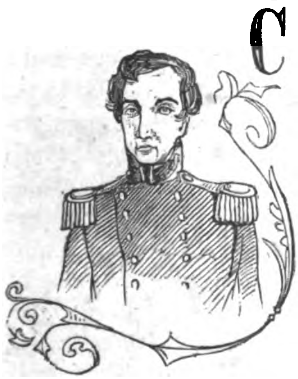
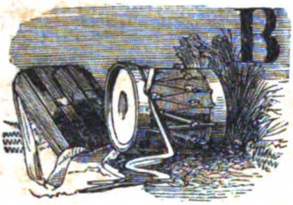
* These atrocities are only fair specimens of what the Indians are constantly perpetrating, in the district of San Luis. Four hundred Mexicans, including many women and children, have been killed by them in that district during this war.



CAPTAIN BURGWIN found them six hundred strong, posted on the precipitous sides of the mountains, where the gorge would only admit the passage of three men abreast. There could scarcely be a better position for defence than that they held, yet Captain Burgwin drove them from it, with the loss, on their part, of twenty killed and sixty wounded. He had only one man killed and one wounded. He marched through the pass and entered Embudo. From thence he marched to Trampas, where he met Colonel Price, and the whole army marched over the Taos mountain, breaking a road through the snow which covered it for their artillery. The enemy were found to have fortified Pueblo de Taos, a place of great strength, surrounded by adobe walls and strong pickets, every part of which were flanked by some projecting building. He opened his batteries on the town on the 3d of February, but in a little time retired to await the concentration of his forces. On the 4th, at nine o'clock in the morning, the fire was again opened, and at eleven, finding it was impossible to make a breach in the walls with the howitzers, the colonel determined to storm the church, which was in the north-western angle of the town. Captain Burgwin led the attack. His party established themselves under the western wall of the church, and attempted to breach it with axes, while the roof was fired by the help of a temporary ladder. In this emergency, the gallant commander exposed himself fatally to the enemy. Captain Burgwin left the shelter afforded by the flank of the church, and penetrating into the corral in front of that building, endeavoured to force the door.



BURGWIN, in this daring effort, received a wound which caused his death on the 7th February. Several other officers had accompanied him to the church door, but they were not able to force it, and therefore retired behind the wall; while they had been thus engaged, some small holes had been cut in the wall, and shells were thrown in by hand, doing good execution. A six-pounder was now brought around by Lieutenant Wilson, who poured a heavy fire of grape into the town from the distance of six hundred yards. The enemy had maintained a steady and heavy fire upon our troops during the whole fight. At half past three, ten rounds of grape were fired within sixty yards, into the holes that had been cut in the church wall with the axes, and a practicable breach was thus made. The gun was then run up to ten yards' distance, a shell was fired, and three more rounds of grape followed. Lieutenants Dyer, Wilson, and Taylor then entered and took possession of the church, feeling for the foe in the smoke which filled it. The capture of the town was then speedily effected. Many of the enemy endeavoured to escape towards the mountains, but were intercepted by Captains Slack and St. Vrain, who killed fifty-one of them. They then sued for peace, and to obtain it gave up towns, the Indians who had been concerned in the murder of Governor Bent, and much of the property of the murdered Americans. The people of Moro, a town on the east side of the mountains, had risen on the 19th of January, and massacred eight Americans residing there. Captain Henley being near the town at the time, attempted to take it, but was repulsed with the loss of his life. Captain Morin reinforced the assailants, and took and burned the town. The Indians begged for peace, giving up those who had excited them to hostilities. The active participants in the rebellion were tried, and many who were convicted and condemned were promptly executed. For his zeal and gallantry in these movements, Colonel Price was rewarded by promotion to the rank of brigadier-general.

The Camanche, Anapaho, and Kiawa tribes of Indians, with others inhabiting the country from Missouri to Sante Fe and California, kept up such a series of hostilities and outrages, that it was found necessary to send a battalion of troops thither, under Colonel Gilpin. That energetic officer speedily succeeded by his judicious measures and his great activity, in bringing the country into quietness and order, and the Sante Fe trader and the government trains pass unmolested. Many of the Indians have fled to a distance from the route, and we may reasonably expect soon to see this region of country under the safe guardianship of the hardy western pioneer and his trusty rifle.*

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* The glowing accounts of California, published by all who had visited it, and of which we attempted to give some idea in the first pages of this chapter, afforded ample ground for the opinion that the country would be rapidly filled up by emigrants from the United States. Since those pages were written, there has been added to the very many advantages of the country, there enumerated, one which throws them all into the shade; and which of itself would be sufficient in this money-getting age, to populate a desert. Scarcely had the treaty been completed by which California was ceded to the United States, when the enterprising, observant, inquisitive Yankee settlers discovered that the country from the Ajuba to the San Joaquim rivers, a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles, and from the base towards the summit of the mountains, for a distance of seventy miles, was a mine of gold.

It is said that gold mines were discovered in California by the Jesuits, about the middle of the last century. The Jesuits concealed their discovery from the government, and the suspicion that they had done so perhaps had something to do with their expulsion from Mexico. In 1769, Don Jose Galvez, Marquis of Sonora, undertook an expedition into California to ascertain the truth of the reports respecting the gold "in the rivers, in the soil, and in the rocks." He was accompanied by the celebrated Don Miguel Jose de Arenza, who, discouraged by the fruitless search of a few weeks, recommended the abandonment of the enterprise; and for contending that the marquis was insane for proceeding, was thrown into prison, where he remained several months. Nothing at all satisfactory, however, appears to have resulted from the search of Galvez, though the Jesuits afterwards disclosed, in Spain and France, that the charges of discovery and concealment, made against them, were true.

Thus the matter rested until the new discovery by the Americans in the commencement of the year 1848, since which time every day has disclosed some new deposit. It has been found in large quantities on the Sacramento, Feather river, Yerba river, the American Fork, north and south branches, the Cosamir, and in many dry ravines, and on the tops of high hills. On the streams where the gold has been subjected to the action of water and sand, it is found in fine grains; on the hills and among the clefts of the rocks, it is found in rough, jagged pieces, of a quarter or half an ounce in weight, and sometimes two or three ounces.

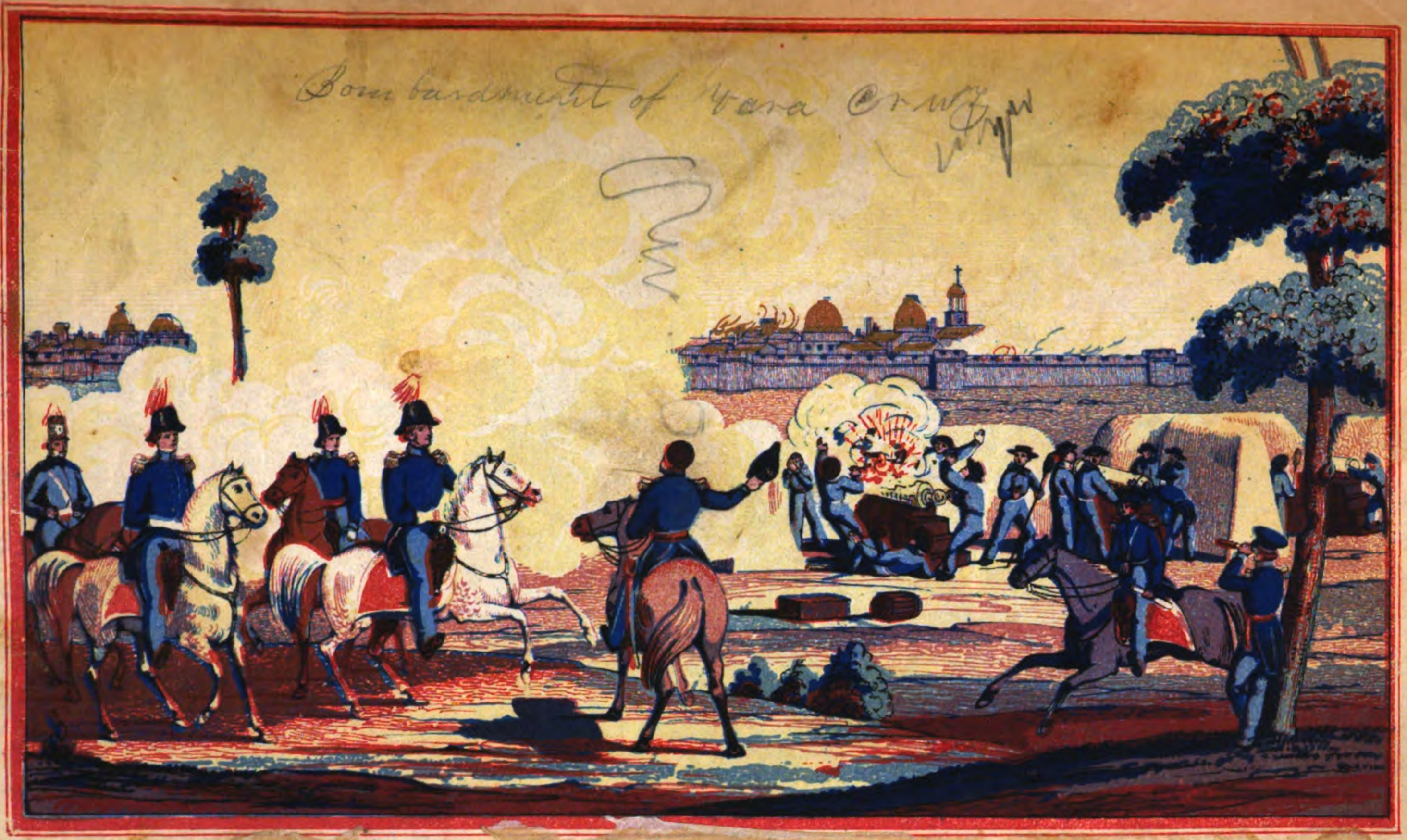
The manner in which it has hitherto been collected is extremely wasteful, yet the yield has been enormous. A variety of means are used for obtaining it, a few of which we give from a letter of the Rev. Walter Colton, alcalde of Monterey. "Some wash it out of the sand with bowls, some with a machine like a cradle, only longer and open at the foot, while at the other end, instead of a squalling infant, there is a grating upon which the earth is thrown, and then water; both pass through the grating, the cradle is rocked, and being on an inclined plane, the water carries off the earth, and the gold is deposited in the bottom of the cradle. So the two things most prized in this world—gold and infant beauty, are both rocked out of their primitive state, one to pamper pride, and the other to pamper the worm. Some forego cradles and bowls as too tame an occupation, and, mounted on horses, half-wild, dash up the mountain gorges, and over the steep hill, picking the gold from the clefts of the rocks with their bowie knives—a much better use to make of these instruments than picking the life out of men's bodies. Monterey, San Francisco, Sonoma, San Jose, and Santa Cruz are emptied of their male population. A stranger coming there would suppose he had arrived among a race of women. But not a few of the women have gone too, especially those who had got out of tea; for what is woman without her tea-pot—a Pythoness without her shaking tripod—an angel that has lost his lyre. Every bowl, tray, warming-pan, and piggin has gone to the mines. Every thing, in short, that has a scoop in it, that will hold sand and water. All the iron has been worked up into crowbars, pickaxes, and spades. Over a million of gold is taken from the mines every month; and this amount was expected to be more than doubled when the emigration from the states, the Sandwich Islands, Oregon, and the southern republics should arrive.

The amount collected by each man ranges from ten dollars to three hundred dollars daily. The publisher of "The Californian" newspaper states that on a tour to the mining district, with the aid of a shovel, pick. and tin pan, twenty inches in diameter, he collected from forty-four to one hundred and twenty-eight dollars a day, averaging about one hundred dollars. Previous to the discovery of the gold wages of labour ranged from one to three dollars per day; but the workingmen all became gold-hunters, and common labour could not be had for less than fifty cents per hour, while carpenters and other mechanics refused the offer of fifteen dollars per day for work. Whalers and trading-vessels coming into the Bay of San Francisco lost all their crews by desertion. The volunteer regiment of U. S. soldiers was mustered out of the service, and all of them went gold-hunting. Much sickness prevailed among those engaged in the work, but the number was constantly increasing, and at the latest accounts, large numbers were providing themselves with an outfit for five or six months, intending, as they could not traverse the country between the settlements and the mines during the rainy season, to spend that part of the year in the gold region. Mr. Larkin, formerly U. S. consul at Monterey, writes to Mr. Buchanan, that he passed two nights at a tent occupied by eight Americans,—two sailors, one clerk, two carpenters, and three daily workmen. They were in company, having two machines, each made from one hundred feet of boards, (worth there one hundred and fifty dollars, in Monterey fifteen dollars, being one day's work,) made similar to a child's cradle, ten feet long without the ends. On two evenings he saw these men bring to their tent the labours of the day. He supposes they made each fifty dollars per day. Their own calculation was two pounds of gold a day—four ounces to a man—sixty-four dollars.

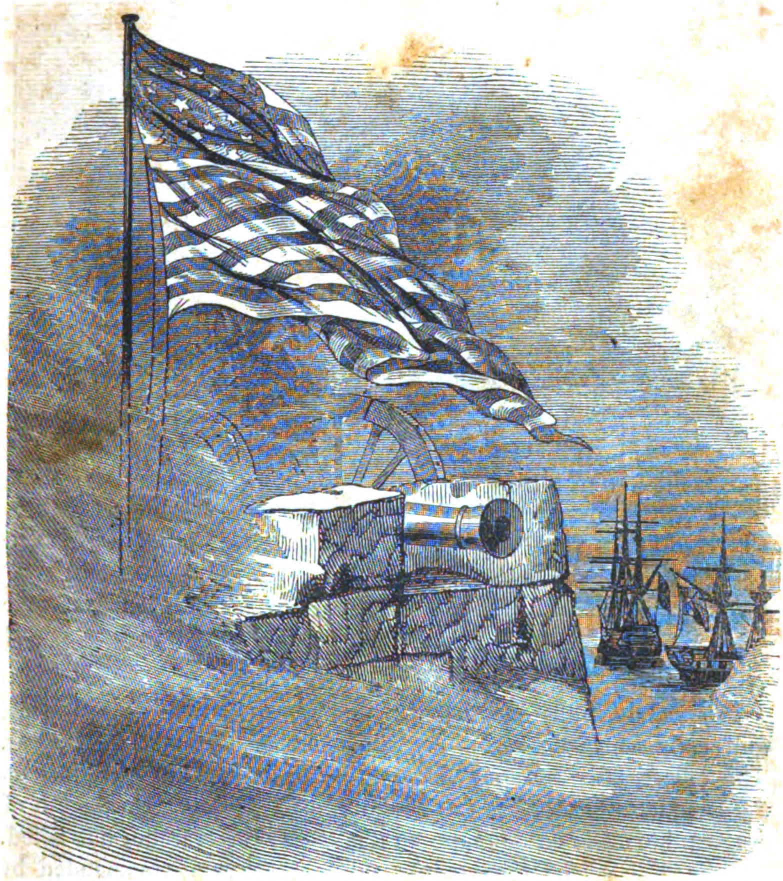
The effect upon property in San Francisco and Monterey was astonishing to its owners. Three-fourths of the houses were deserted, and many could be bought at the price of the ground lots. All business ceased, except perhaps, that of the blacksmiths, whose forges proved to be placers in themselves, in consequence of the great demand for shovels, picks, and similar articles. Soldiers, sailors, clerks, alcaldes, and justices, all abandoned their employment, and resorted to the gold lands. Mr. Larkin states that he saw there a lawyer who was attorney-general of the king of the Sandwich Islands, the previous year, digging and washing out his ounce and a-half a day, while near him could be found most of his brethren of the long robe, working in the same occupation.

Governor Mason's despatch to the government at Washington, accompanied by very valuable specimens of the gold obtained by this rude system of mining, confirms in all particulars, the accounts received by private letters. He states that the entire gold district, with the exception of a very few grants made by the Mexican authorities, is public land. The large extent of country, the character of the people engaged, and the small force at his command, made it impracticable to adopt any means to secure to the government rents or fees for the privilege of mining the gold, and he therefore resolved to let all work freely. Crime was very rare, and no thefts or robberies had been committed in the gold district. The gold received from Governor Mason and others has been assayed at the United States Mint, and by eminent chemists, and proves to have an average fineness equal to that of standard American coin.

The route from the western states to California, via St. Louis and Santa Fe, we have had occasion to speak of in the preceding pages of this work, and the accounts given by Colonel Fremont and others who have travelled it, have been often repeated in public journals. From the Atlantic seaboard, the most usual passage to the coast of California has heretofore been by sailing vessels round Cape Horn. In order to shorten the time required by this passage, many resort to the route across the isthmus of Panama. The passengers by this route are landed at Chagres, a town situated at the mouth of the river of that name, in the midst of a swamp, where logs have to be laid along the streets at all times, to enable the inhabitants to pass from one of their mud huts to another. Its climate has long been famous as the very worst in the world, and travellers never stop there over night who can avoid it. The passage up the river is performed in canoes to Cruces, or Gorgona, forty or fifty miles, and then by mules or horses to Panama, a distance of twenty-one miles. Panama is by no means a healthy city, but it is much safer for a foreigner to reside in than Chagres. Here the traveller embarks for San Francisco and the gold country.


Bombardment of Vera Cruz

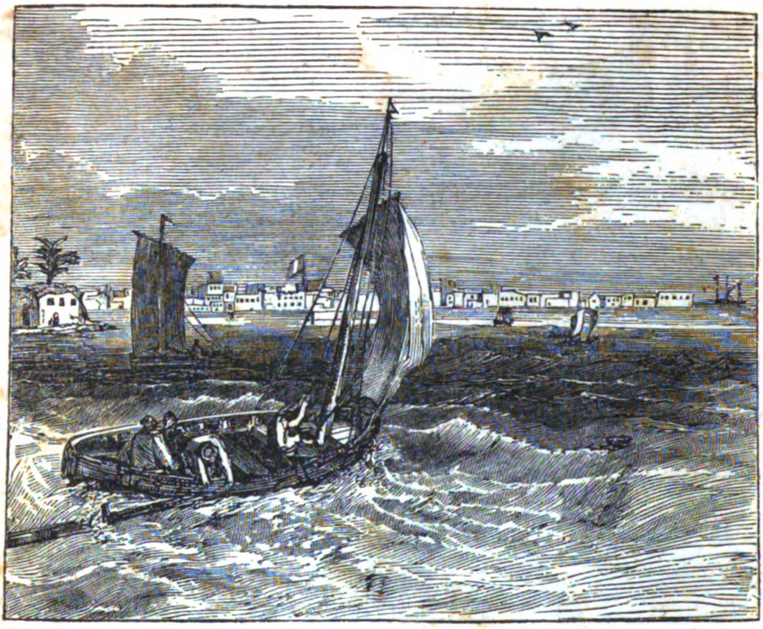
BOMBARDMENT OF VERA CRUZ.



CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SIEGE OF VERA CRUZ.

BESIDES the three expeditions against Mexico, conducted by Generals Taylor, Wool, and Kearny, the United States government had designed another, which was to land at some point on the western part of the Gulf of Mexico, and proceed thence to the capital. The force employed was denominated the Army of Invasion, and was placed under the care of the general-in-chief of the American army, Major-General Scott.

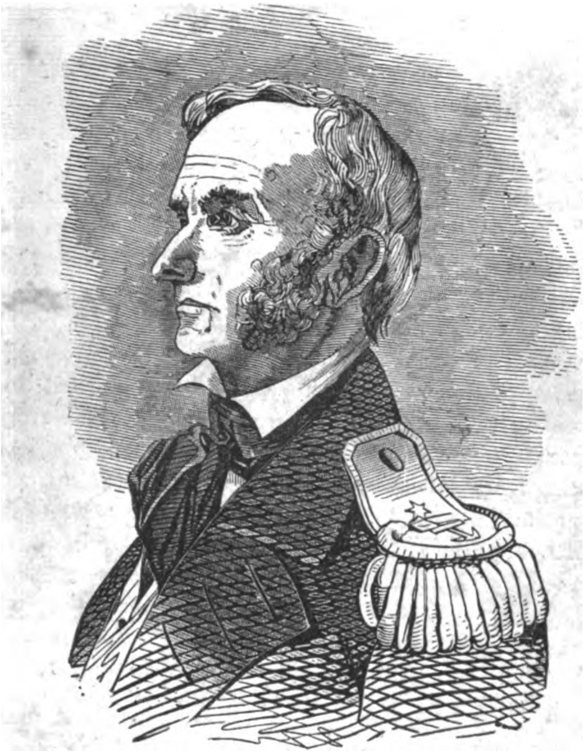


Tampico

Preparatory to this movement a small squadron was placed in the gulf early in 1846, under the command of Commodore Conner. This officer, after assisting General Taylor during his operations on the Rio Grande, sailed in the direction of Tampico. On the 7th of August, he made an attempt on the town of Alvarado, but failed. On the 15th of the same month, the brig Truxtun, commanded by officer Carpender, ran aground on the bar of Tuspan. On the 17th she was abandoned by all the officers and men, except Lieutenant Hunter, with a boat's crew. The latter succeeded in regaining the squadron, but the others were captured by the enemy, and subsequently exchanged for General La Vega, and his fellow prisoners. The Truxtun being utterly immovable was burnt.

On the 15th of October, Commodore Conner made a second attack upon the town of Alvarado. His force was three steamers, three gun-boats, and two schooners. The first division crossed the bar and engaged with a Mexican battery of seven guns, placed at the entrance of the river. The second division, however, was prevented from crossing by the grounding of a steamer. The commodore finding it would be folly to proceed with the first division, withdrew his vessels and abandoned the attempt.

On the 16th of October, Commodore Perry sailed from the squadron



Commodore Conner.

to attack the town of Tabasco, having with him two steamers and seven schooners. Crossing the bar on the 23d, he took, without resistance, the small town of Frontera, capturing all the vessels in port, including two steamers. On the following day he commenced the ascent of the river leading to Tabasco. Reaching a fort which commanded a difficult pass, he forced the enemy to evacuate it, and then spiked the guns; and at noon on the 25th, all his vessels were anchored in front of the town. After a slight engagement, it was spared at the earnest solicitation of the foreign merchants. In this expedition, Commodore Perry captured or destroyed all the vessels in the river, comprising two steamers and eleven sail of ships, and put a stop to a trade by which munitions were introduced from Yucatan to Mexico. On the 12th of November, Tampico surrendered to Commodore Conner without resistance.

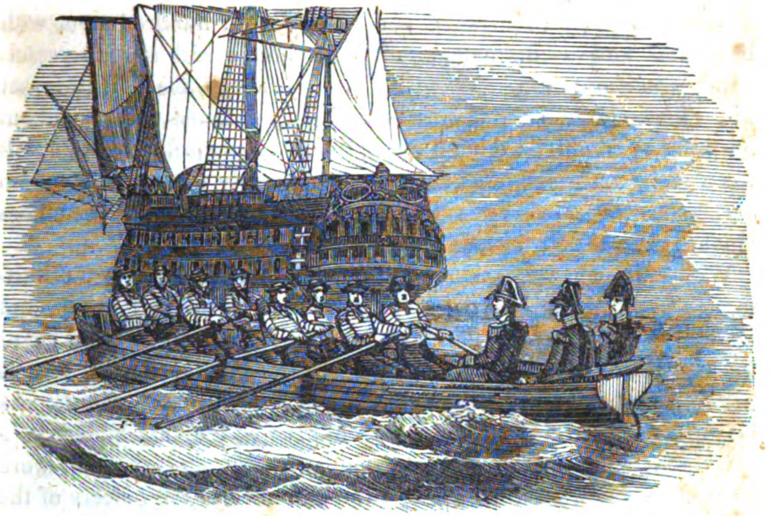
On the night of November 20, Lieutenant Parker, Midshipmen Rogers and Hynson, and six men, rowed in a small boat to the Mexican brig, Creole, and succeeded in burning her under the guns of San Juan de Ulloa. So daring a feat reflects great credit on the lieutenant and his little company.

These were the principal operations along the western gulf coast prior to the arrival of General Scott. It had been the ardent desire of that officer, from the beginning of the war, to take the field in person; but his plan of operations being opposed by government, he was obliged to remain at Washington. Late in November, however, he received orders from President Polk to take charge of the force on the gulf coast. He set out immediately, and reached the seat of war, January 1, 1847.

The first object of the campaign was the reduction of Vera Cruz, and the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa. The force assembled on the coast was inadequate to this undertaking, and General Scott found himself under the necessity of withdrawing part of the army of occupation from General Taylor. These troops reached him in February, augmenting his numbers to more than eleven thousand.

During the same month, the Ondiaka vessel was wrecked near the Island of Lobos, having on board a regiment of Louisiana volunteers, commanded by Colonel De Russy. On reaching the island, they met a large force of the enemy, under General Cos, who immediately demanded their surrender. The colonel's party having no arms, resistance was impracticable; but he artfully managed to delay an answer until night, at the same time drawing up his troops as if for battle. Then deserting his heavy baggage, he lighted camp fires, and under cover of the darkness marched rapidly for Tampico, which he gained without encountering opposition.

Every thing was now ready for the movements preparatory to the attack upon the castle and the city. Before describing this, it may be proper to describe the strength of this celebrated fortress, and its capabilities for defensive warfare. Its construction was commenced in 1582, upon a bar or bank fronting Vera Cruz, at the distance of ten hundred and sixty two yards from the main land. The centre of the area, occupied by the fortress, is a small island renowned in Aztec mythology as the site of a temple, in which human victims were offered to the Sun. The exterior polygon facing the city, is three hundred yards long, and that defending the north channel more than two hundred. The walls are about five yards in thickness, constructed of a species of soft coral, and faced on the exterior with hard stone. It is supplied with water by seven cisterns, which will hold more than a thousand cubic feet of water. An officer of the American army describes its strength at the time of the attack, in the following language:—"There are at present mounted, nearly three hundred cannon, and wherever it has been possible to train a gun,



General Scott going on board the Commodore's Ship.

upon the channel of approach, it is planted; so that a fleet moving up to the attack, must be exposed to the concentrated fire of seventy cannon, over a distance of two miles before it can get into position to return a shot. The castle of San Juan is about three-eighths of a mile from the city, and is supported by a water battery at the north-west angle of the town, of fifty thirty-two and forty-two-pound guns, all of which would bear upon a squadron passing up from the moment it arrived within range until within musket-shot. The garrison at this time, is composed of two thousand men. In the event of an attack, they could, with the most perfect safety, retire within the casements (which are as impervious to shot as the sides of Mount Orizaba) until the ammunition of the assailing force was expended, when they would return to their guns and sweep the waters with the most terrific effect. The officer commanding the castle lately sent official word, that 'if the commodore would bring his fleet up, he might fire until there was not a shot in the locker, and he would promise not to return a shot until he was done.'"

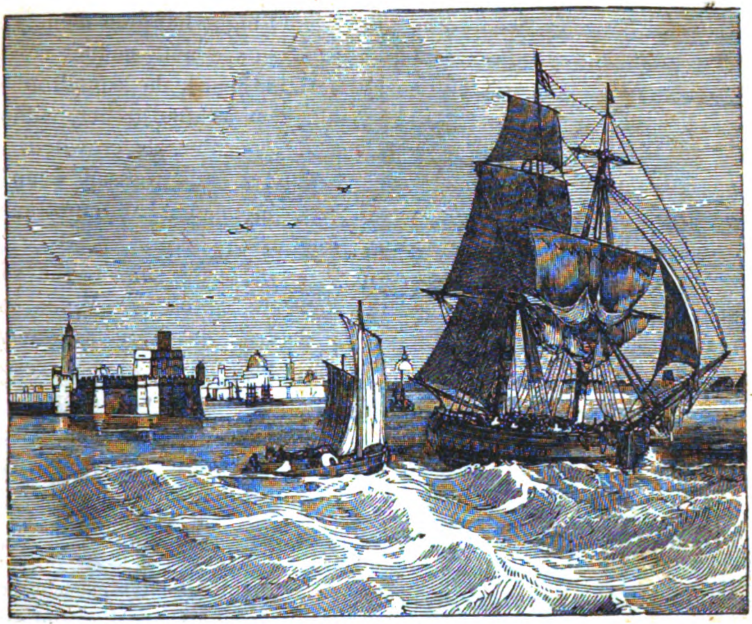
Early in March the American army at Tampico embarked on board the gulf squadron, commanded by Commodore Conner. On the 7th the fleet reached Anton Lizardo, near Vera Cruz, when the general, accompanied by Conner, made a reconnoissance of the coast, and chose a portion of the beach west of Isle Sacrificios, as a suitable spot for landing. On the 9th this event took place. Although the anchorage here was extremely narrow, yet before daylight all necessary preparations had been completed. Each of the frigates received on board between twenty-five and twenty-eight hundred men, with their arms and accoutrements, and the sloops and smaller vessels numbers in proportion. When all were on board, the squadron set sail. Each ship anchored in the small space allotted to her, without the slightest trouble, although the harbour was densely crowded. It was a scene of grand and stirring beauty rarely witnessed, even in war, unaccompanied by any of those melancholy circumstances which render the battle-field so horrible.

While the men were being transferred from the ships to the surf-boats, the commodore directed the steamers Spitfire and Vixen, and five gun-boats, to form a line parallel with the beach, so as to cover the landing. From the lightness of their draught, these small vessels were enabled to take positions within good range of the shore. As the guns received their complements of troops, they assembled in a line abreast, between the fleet and the gun-boats, and when all were ready, they moved together, under the guidance of the officers of the squadron. The enemy offered no resistance, and thus more than four thousand men were thrown on shore together; so that in a very short time the whole army had been landed, without the slightest accident. General Worth, commanding the first line of the army, had the satisfaction of forming his troops on the beach and neighbouring heights before sunset. He was followed, during the evening, by General Twiggs.

The success attending the disembarkation is not more remarkable than the apathy displayed by the Mexican garrison during the landing. The sight of the Americans on shore aroused, however, their energies, and they began preparations for a suitable defence. Morales, the commandant, issued a proclamation, calling on soldiers and citizens to assist him in his efforts to put both city and castle in the best possible condition.

On the day of landing, Commodore Conner permitted the marines of the squadron to join the army as part of the 3d regiment of artillery. Some days after they were further reinforced by Captains Ker and Thornton, and Colonel Harney, accompanied by a considerable body of men and many horses.

On the 11th, General Scott received a request from Senor Don Afilass G. de Escalante, the Spanish consul at Vera Cruz, that the rights of Spanish residents might be respected during the siege, and in case of assault. In answer, the American commander acknowledged the relation between Spain and the United States, and promised to conform to the request if possible; but at the same time he mentioned the difficulty of discriminating between friend and foe, especially if the city should be stormed at night. With the answer,

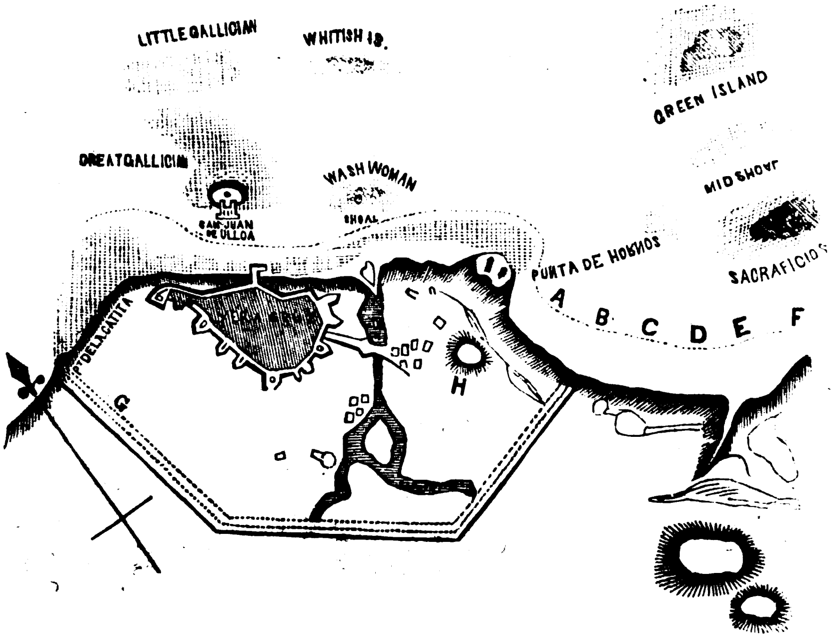


Vera Cruz.

the general sent a printed safeguard to the consul, and another, to be left in his care, for the British consul. Similar papers were addressed to the French and Prussian ministers. The time between this correspondence and the 22d was occupied in landing mortars, planting batteries, and investing the city. On that day General Scott summoned the city and castle to surrender, promising to the garrisons of both places the honours of war. The commandant replied, that he had prepared for a vigorous defence, and that it would ill become his character as a servant of the republic, to surrender his trust.

On receiving this answer, General Scott commenced his bombardment. Seven mortars opened from land, while the small vessels of the squadron approached near enough to the city to add their fire. All night the firing continued, the bombardment presenting a scene sublime and terrific. "Bombs," says an eye-witness, "were flying into Vera Cruz like hail. Sulphureous flashes, clouds of smoke, and the dull booms of heavy guns arose from the walls of the city in return; while ever and anon a red sheet of flame would leap from the great brass mortars of the castle, followed by a report which fairly made the earth tremble. * * * * A huge black cloud of smoke hung like a pall over the American army, completely concealing it from view; the Mexicans had ceased firing in order to prevent our troops from directing their guns by the flashes from the walls; but, having

PLAN OF VERA CRUZ AND SAN JUAN DE ULLOA.


LITTLE GALLICIAN
WHITISH IS.
GREEN ISLAND
GREAT GALLICIAN
SAN JUAN DE ULLOA
WASH WOMAN
SHOAL
MID SHOAL
PUNTA DE HORNOS
SACRAFICIOS
A
B
C
D
E
F
PT DE LA CATITA
G
H

REFERENCES.

A and C. The positions of the steamers Spitfire and Vixen.

G. American line of intrenchments, established March 13th—extending from Point de la Catita to a point opposite B

B, D, E, and F. The positions of the gunboats.

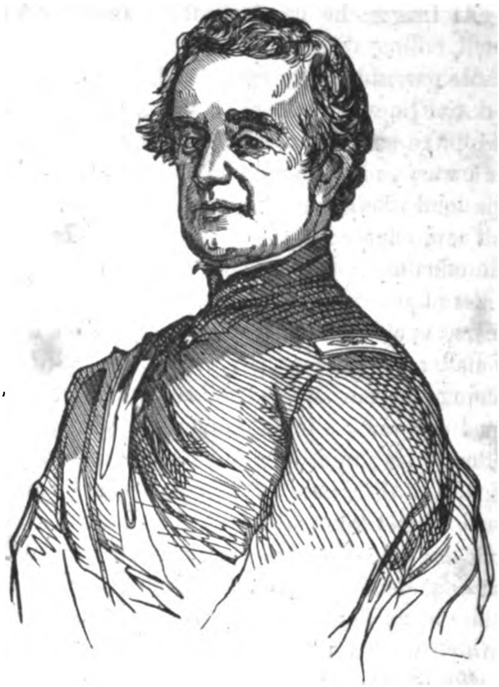
H. A Mexican redoubt captured by our forces.

The sloop of war John Adams was anchored on the south side of Sacrificios, opposite F.

obtained the exact range before dark, the gunners continued their fire, every shell falling directly into the city. Suddenly a vivid, lightning-like flash would gleam for an instant upon the dense cloud of smoke over our lines, and then, as the roar of the great mortar was borne to our ears, the ponderous shell would be seen to dart upward like a meteor, and after describing a semicircle in the air, descend with a loud crash upon the house-tops, or into the resounding streets. Then, after a brief but awful moment of suspense, a lurid glare, illuminating for an instant the white domes and grim fortresses of Vera Cruz, falling into ruins with the shock, and the echoing crash that came to our ears told that a shell had exploded, and executed its terrible mission."

In the morning, the smaller vessels were withdrawn, on account of their exposed situation. Three additional mortars were placed in battery, and the whole fire of the Americans was now concentrated upon the city with terrible effect. At the same time the guns of the castle were in full blaze; but although shot and shell were flying in every direction, the American loss was only two men killed and four wounded. Among the former was the gallant and amiable Captain Vinton. On the same day, thirteen heavy guns arrived from Tampico, two of which were landed; but a norther then set in with such violence, that communication with the fleet, and even the siege itself were suspended. During the night the storm abated, and early the next morning the fleet recommenced the landing of military stores. The firing continued at intervals the whole of this day, the naval batteries co-operating with the land forces. Towards evening, the ammunition became exhausted, and a reoccurrence of the norther prevented any active operations on the American side. During this cessation, General Scott received, from the foreign consuls of the city, a request that a truce might be granted to allow neutrals, and the Mexican women and children to leave the city. To this the general replied, that a truce could be granted only on an application of the governor, with a view to surrender; that in sending safeguards to the different consuls, commencing as far back as the 15th instant, he had distinctly admonished them of subsequent dangers; that although at that date he had refused to allow any person to pass the line of investment either way, yet up to the 22d, the blockade had been left open to the consuls and other neutrals to pass out to their respective ships of war. This answer contained a copy of the summons to the governor, showing that General Scott had considered the case of the women and children before the siege commenced.

The destruction within the city was now so great, that the citizens implored the governor to surrender. This he refused to do. A council



Colonel Totten.

of citizens and officers was then held, which requested him immediately to resign. This was complied with, and General Landero was appointed to succeed him. He sent overtures for a truce early on the 26th, and negotiations were carried on as actively as the stormy condition of the weather would permit. Generals Worth and Pillow, and Colonel Totten were appointed commissioners for the Americans; and Pedro M. Herrera, Jose Gutierrez de Villanueva, and Manuel Robles, for the Mexicans. The fleet was not represented, on account of the impossibility of communication.

When these officers met, the Mexican commissioners presented six propositions, asking to evacuate the city without hindrance; to march out with the honours of war, and a full allowance of stores and field-pieces; to salute their flag on its being struck; to be assured that private property and the enjoyment of religious opinions would be respected; that the guards of Vera Cruz should retire, unmolested, to their homes; and that, in case the siege continued, the neutrals be permitted to pass out. Most of these General Scott refused to grant, and negotiations recommenced. Captain Aulick now arrived from the fleet, and, at the request of General Scott, was admitted to the conference. At length the commissioners agreed on the following terms:

1. The whole garrison, or garrisons, to be surrendered to the arms of the United States, as prisoners of war, the 29th instant, at ten o'clock, A. M.; the garrisons to be permitted to march out with all the honours of war, and to lay down their arms to such officers as may be appointed by the general-in-chief of the United States armies, and at a point to be agreed upon by the commissioners.

2. Mexican officers shall preserve their arms and private effects, including horses and horse-furniture, and to be allowed, regular and irregular officers, as also the rank and file, five days to retire to their respective homes, on parole, as hereinafter prescribed.

3. Coincident with the surrender, as stipulated in article 1, the Mexican flags of the various forts and stations shall be struck, saluted by their own batteries; and, immediately thereafter, Forts Santiago and Conception, and the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, occupied by the forces of the United States.

4. The rank and file of the regular portion of the prisoners to be disposed of after surrender and parole, as their general-in-chief may desire, and the irregular to be permitted to return to their homes. The officers, in respect to all arms and descriptions of force, giving the usual parole, that the said rank and file, as well as themselves, shall not serve again until duly exchanged.

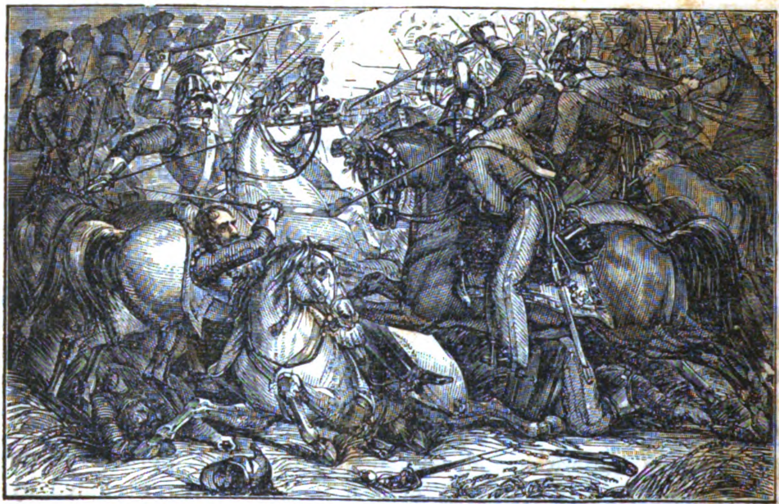
5. All the *materiel* of war, and all public property of every description found in the city, the castle of San Juan de Ulloa, and their dependencies, to belong to the United States; but the armament of the same (not injured or destroyed in the farther prosecution of the actual war) may be considered as liable to be restored to Mexico by a definite treaty of peace.

6. The sick and wounded Mexicans to be allowed to remain in the city, with such medical officers and attendants, and officers of the army, as may be necessary to their care and treatment.

7. Absolute protection is solemnly guarantied to persons in the city, and property, and it is clearly understood that no private building or property is to be taken or used by the forces of the United States, without previous arrangement with the owners, and for a fair equivalent.

8. Absolute freedom of religious worship and ceremonies is solemnly guarantied.

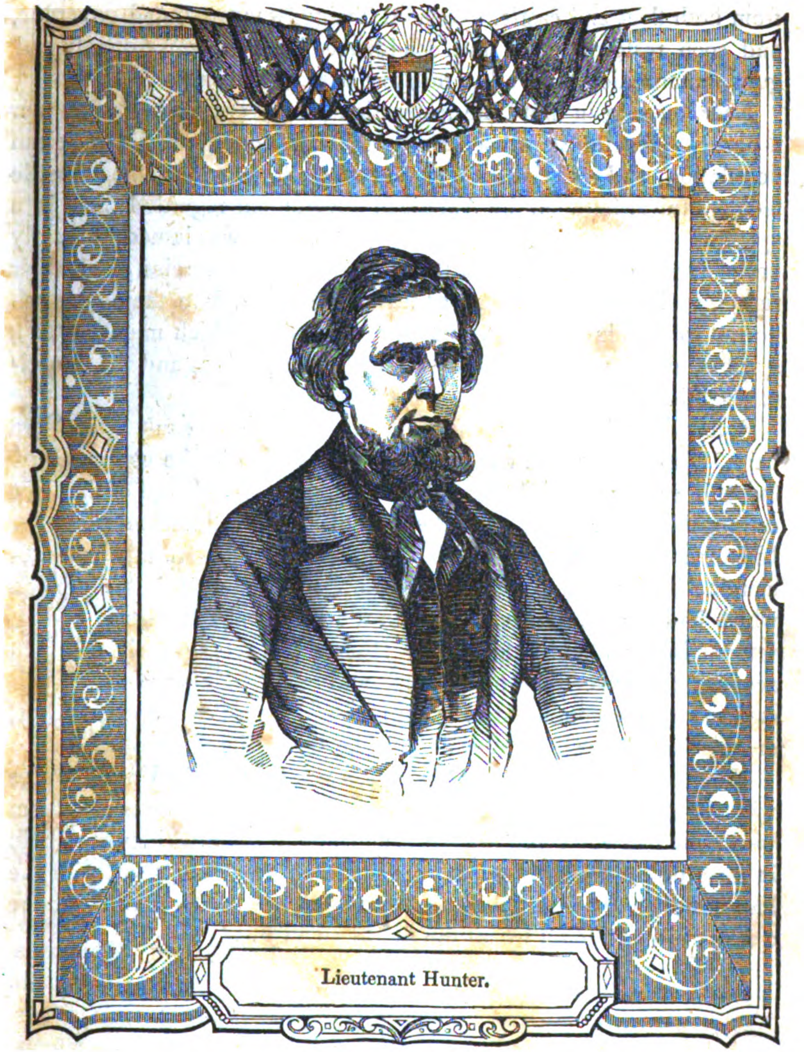
During the siege, Colonel Harney, of the dragoons, had a severe skirmish with a large body of Mexican cavalry, stationed outside the city. Without knowing the exact force of the enemy, he set out in pursuit of them with one hundred and twenty of his men. When



Colonel Harney's Dragoon Fight.

three miles from General Patterson's head-quarters, he discovered them intrenched near a bridge, and stationed himself so as to watch their movements, while his own men were secure. The Mexicans soon perceived him, and opened their fire. Finding his force too small to cope with them, Harney despatched a messenger to camp for a reinforcement and artillery to break their breastworks. General Patterson sent him sixty dragoons, and infantry and artillery sufficient to swell his force to more than five hundred.

Colonel Harney then formed the Tennessee volunteers on the right, the dragoons on the left, and advanced slowly to draw the Mexican fire, covering his artillery until it could reach a desirable station. On arriving within one hundred and fifty yards of the works, the artillery opened, and soon after the colonel ordered a charge. This was executed with such impetuosity, that the enemy were routed on every side, and pursued for more than a mile. Here the Americans met the main body of lancers, drawn up in line of battle, and, notwithstanding the disparity in numbers, were ordered to charge. After sweeping unscathed through a volley of pistol-shot, they broke headlong among the lancers. Numbers sunk down under the first shock, and then the heavy dragoon met the high spirited lancer hand to hand in mortal fray. For awhile the spectacle was most exciting; but it closed over the Mexicans in rout and disorder. Horses were crushed to earth, their riders unsaddled, lances twisted from their hold, and the main body of the enemy driven in every direction The Americans lost two killed and nine wounded; the enemy,



Lieutenant Hunter.

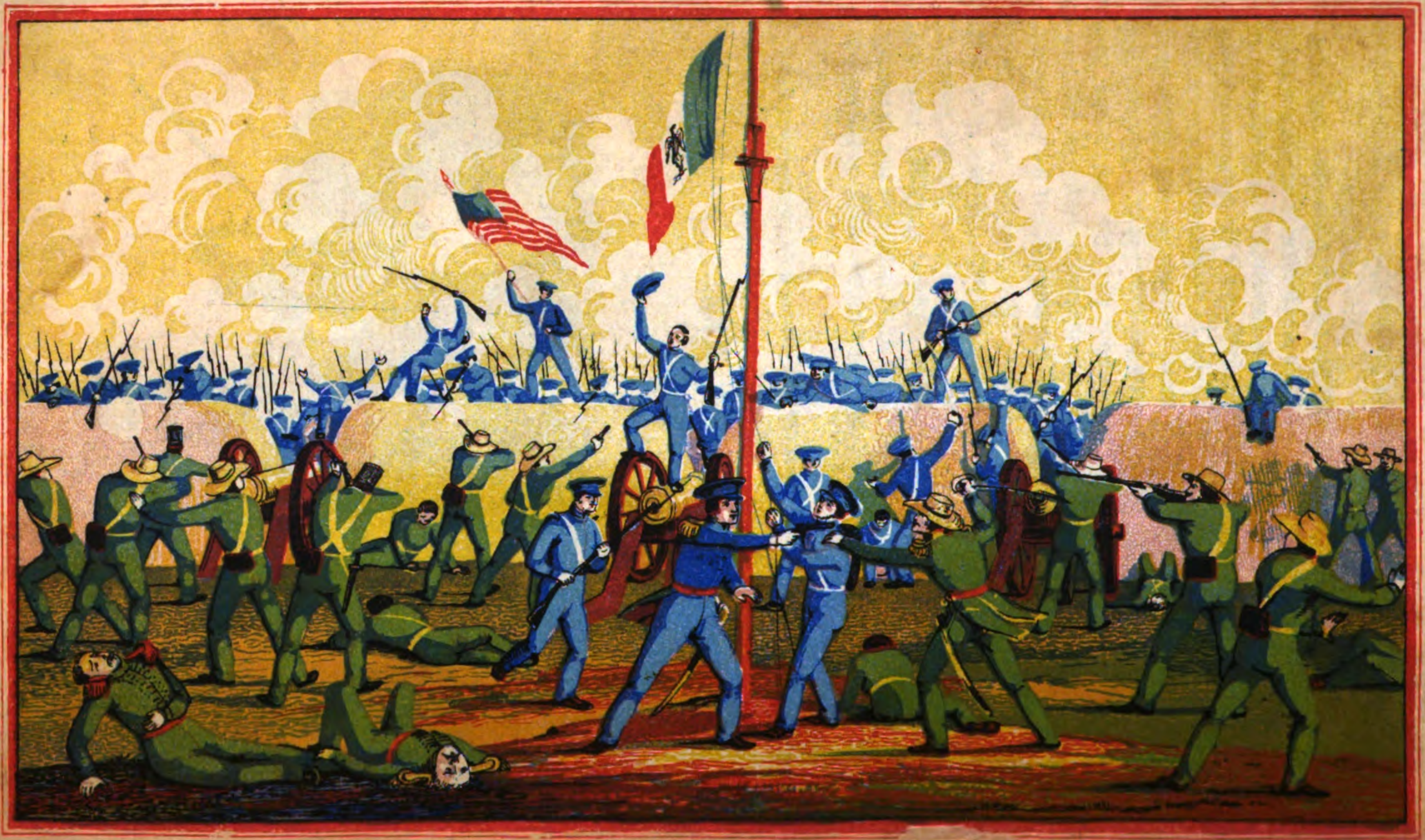
nearly one hundred. Their total force was supposed to number two thousand.

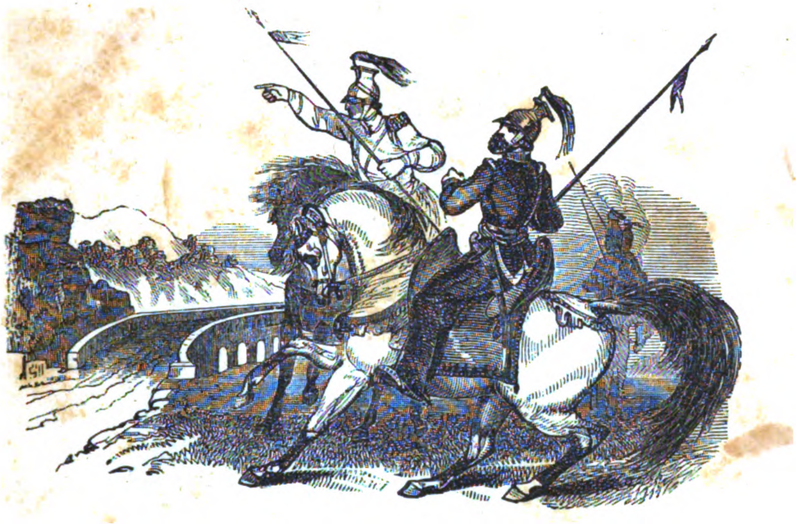
On the 29th of March, the Mexicans evacuated both city and castle, marching to an open plain behind the city, stacking their arms, and then proceeding towards the interior. Women and children accompanied them, bearing heavy burdens, and exhibiting the melancholy consequences of the assault. After their flag was struck, the Americans entered the city amid the strains of national music, the shouts of the overjoyed soldiery, and the loud booming of cannon from both fleet and castle. General Twiggs was appointed governor, and soon restored quiet and confidence. An immense quantity of guns, ammunition, and other military stores were captured.

Ever keeping in mind the instructions of government—to conquer a peace—General Scott used every effort to conciliate the Mexican population, and convince them that so far from entertaining hostile feelings towards them, the American government regarded them in a spirit of amity and forbearance. A proclamation was issued, solemnly promising them protection in the enjoyment and exercise of all their rights, social and religious; while at the same time they were exhorted to remain neutral, and avoid every thing which might foster a spirit of distrust and retaliation between themselves and the American soldiers.

A few days before the commencement of the assault upon Vera Cruz, Commodore Conner had been superseded in the command of the gulf squadron by Commodore Perry, who had charge of the fleet during the whole siege. On the 21st of March a detachment, under Lieutenant Hunter, appeared before the town of Alvarado and demanded its surrender. This was complied with, and thus the place which had been a desired object to the Americans for nearly a year, was attained without bloodshed. Hunter was subsequently called to account for exceeding his orders, and after being severely reprimanded by the commodore, was dismissed from the squadron; but, on reporting himself at Washington, he was ordered on other duty.

News of the taking of Vera Cruz was received in the United States with the wildest demonstrations of joy. Thanks and tokens of esteem were voted to Scott and his army, and public illuminations were held in most of the great cities. It was indeed a great feat, that, with the loss of only a few men killed and wounded, our troops should subdue a fortress, considered by all the world as impregnable.



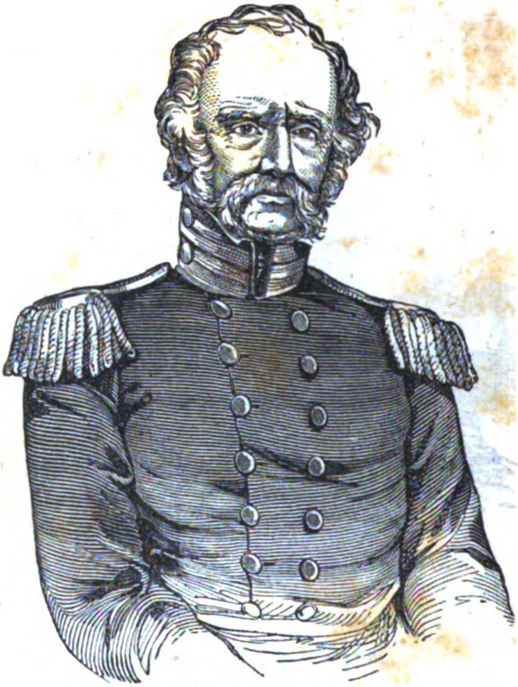


CHAPTER XXV.

MARCH TOWARDS THE CAPITAL, AND BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO.

THE American army remained at Vera Cruz until the 8th of April, when General Twiggs, with his division, marched for the interior. Other divisions followed in regular order. At the close of the third day, the van reached the foot of the great mountain range in sight of Orizaba, and the tall peaks that look up towards it. Through the rocky defiles of this stupendous chain, the great national road winds towards the city of Mexico; and on the precipitous cliffs commanding it was posted, in strong intrenchments, the Mexican army, numbering eleven thousand, and commanded by Santa Anna.

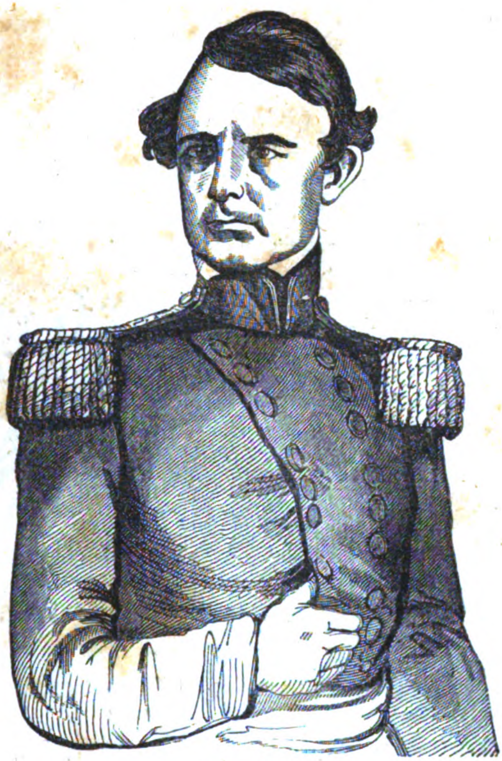
This officer, after his repulse at Buena Vista, had succeeded in



General Twiggs.

raising and equipping another army, with which he hoped to check the advance of the Americans. He chose a position which entirely commanded the road, and where he hoped that the nature of the ground, and the bravery of his soldiers, would enable him to defeat General Scott, and redeem what had been lost at Angostura and Vera Cruz.

On ascertaining the vicinity of the enemy, General Scott resolved to reconnoiter his position daily, so as to open a road in their rear, which would enable him to attack them at two points simultaneousl, This most difficult design was executed as far as the height of Cerro Gordo, the key of the enemy's position, when it became evident that farther advance in that direction was impossible, without a battle. The general therefore made the requisite preparations for an attack, and on the 17th issued his celebrated order, in which, with prophetic accuracy, he detailed each movement of both armies, as well as the line of pursuit. In the evening of that day, Twiggs's division was thrown into position, and, while the advance parties were working upon the road, they were fired upon with grape and musketry. A rather severe skirmish ensued, which lasted until Colonel Harney

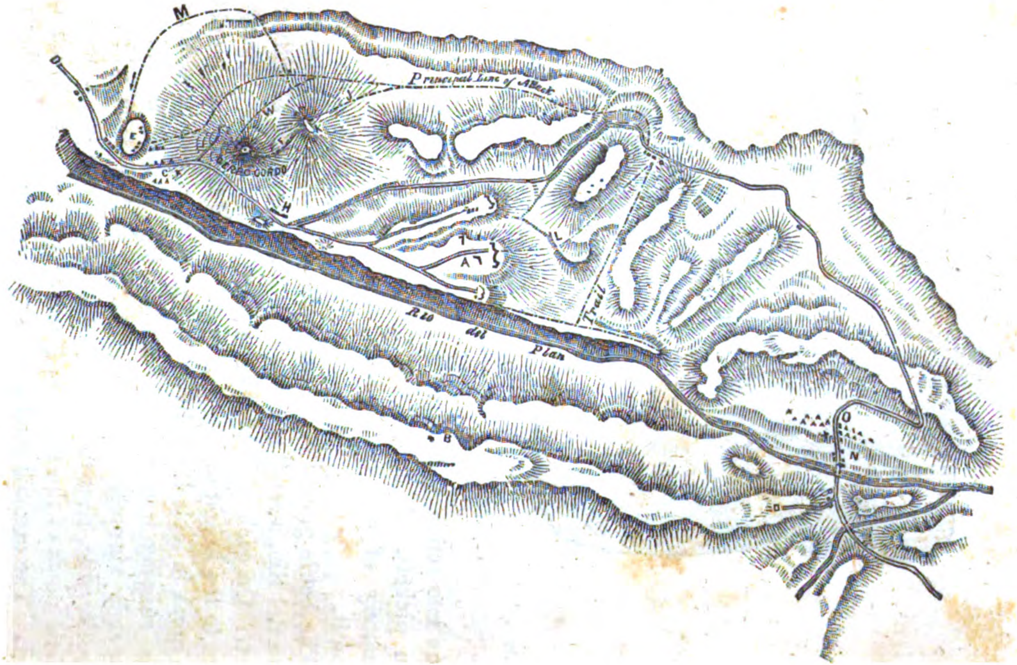


General Pillow.

came into action, with a body of riflemen, and drove in the Mexican pickets. A height near Cerro Gordo was then secured, and a battery of one twenty-four-pounder and two howitzers placed upon it.

The battle ground of Cerro Gordo is bounded on the south by the Plan del Rio, a small stream running at this place directly east and west. On each side of this narrow channel, a steep mountain wall rises to the height of one thousand feet, and then spreads out towards the north in table-land, divided into two portions by a chain of rocky hills running from north to south. On the west, this high surface descends abruptly into a long, narrow valley, from which, on the opposite side, rises the commanding mount of Cerro Gordo, situated a little north of the Plan del Rio, and west of the plateau of table-land. The national road crosses the stream at a small gorge, and winding along the eastern side of the table-land, turns to the west, bounding the northern portion until it enters the narrow valley between the table-land and Cerro Gordo. It runs through this, and

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO.


M
D
E
C
Cerro Gordo
Principal Line of Attack
H
J
A
T
L
Trail
Rio del Plan
B
O
N

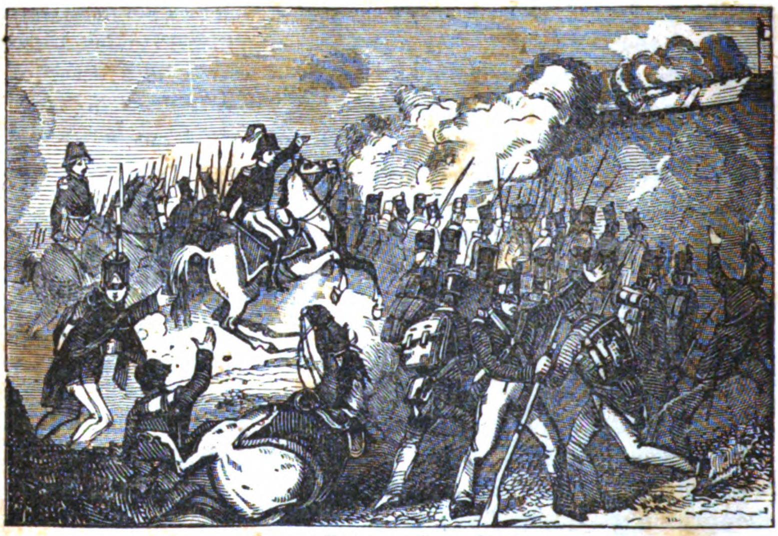
A. 17 Guns Mexican Battery.
B. United States Howitzer.
C. Mexican Camp.
D. Road to Jalapa.
E. Five Guns.
F. Harney's Storming Party.
H. Six Guns Battery.
J. Twiggs's 17 Guns Battery.
K. United States Battery.
L. General Pillow's Brigade.
M. Route of Shields's Brigade.
N. Plan del Rio.
O. American Camp.

turning southward, sweeps round the foot of that position, and then runs west towards Jalapa. West of Cerro Gordo was another strong height, also commanding the road; and north of it a third, on which the Americans planted a heavy battery during the night of the 23d.

Cerro Gordo was defended by a tower and numerous works, and the road leading up the hill to it was at least half a mile in length. An assailing force marching up this road would be exposed to the full range of the enemy's cannon throughout its whole extent. Here Santa Anna had posted his main force of more than six thousand men, whom he commanded in person. The height to the west was also occupied with a large force. But the new road cut by the Americans north of these hills, and ascending them by a precipitous rise, where cannon could not well operate upon an assailing force, saved General Scott's army from the terrible slaughter which would have attended a direct attack upon the front or south side. The storming of this main point of Santa Anna's position was intrusted to the division of General Twiggs. The strong points of the plateau, together with the ridge of hills running north and south, were defended by General La Vega, with more than two thousand men. This was the position attacked by General Pillow, and so gallantly defended by its garrison. The hill west of Cerro Gordo was attacked by the 2d infantry. Shields's brigade was stationed west of it, and on the Jalapa road, in order to cut off the enemy's retreat.

On the night of the 17th, a thousand men were sent from Twiggs's division to erect a battery upon the height north of Cerro Gordo, which had been captured during the evening's skirmish. This as has been mentioned above, consisted of a twenty-four-pounder and two howitzers. This duty was one of difficulty and danger. The soldiers were worn out through long marching, the height was steep, rocky, and several hundred feet high, the night singularly dark, and the pieces so heavy as to be almost unmanageable. The detachment was divided into two sections, each of which dragged up the pieces alternately. Then the troops locked the wheels and sunk exhausted on the rocks, while their comrades advanced to relieve them. At three o'clock A. M. of the 18th, the battery was in a position to open on the enemy.

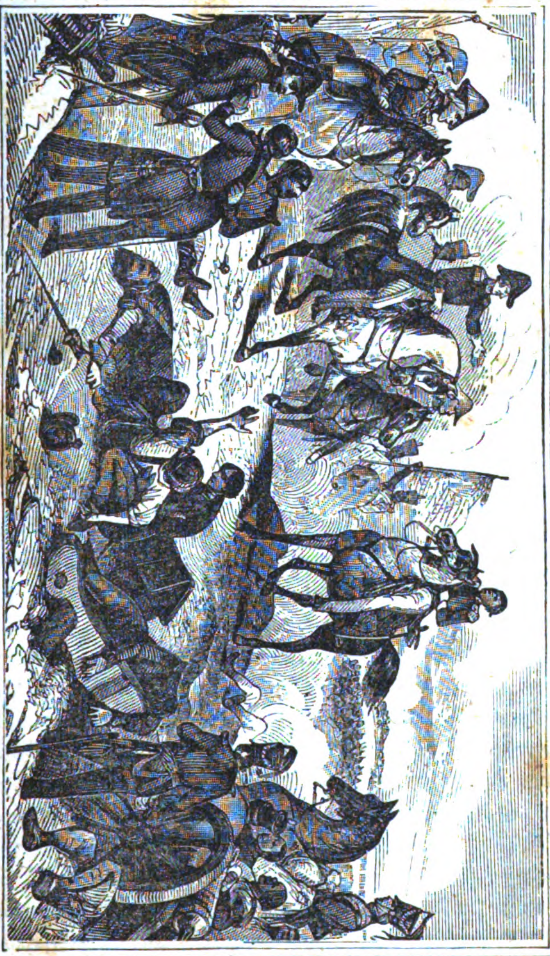
Before daylight, the entire division of Twiggs was roused to storm the height. As the loud cannon opened on each side, Shields hurried on against the fort to the west, so as to carry it and gain the Jalapa road. As light gradually spread among the mountains, the long lines of American soldiery could be seen clambering up the precipitous ascent, in direct route for the main height. Colonel Harney, assisted by Colonel Childs, led the assault, while the comman-



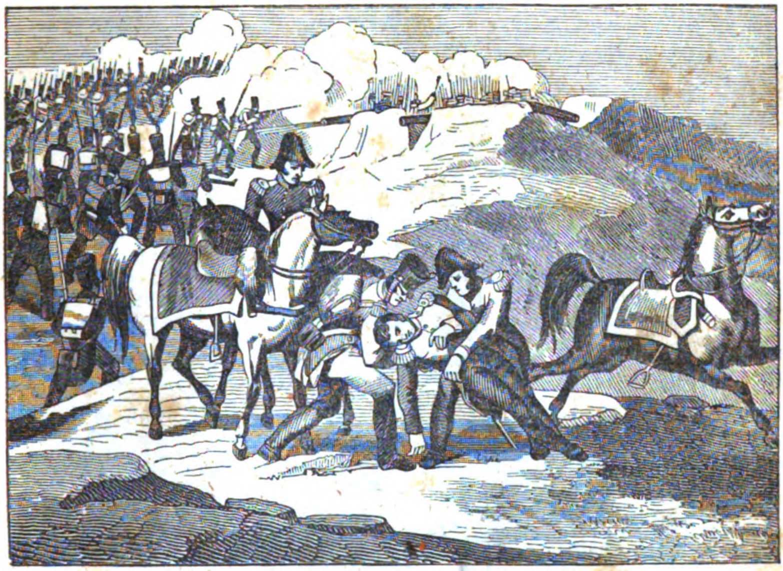
General Twiggs at Cerro Gordo.

der-in-chief fixed his anxious eye upon the movement. Although for some time protected by the steep ledges, the assailants came at length within range of the opposing fire, and the front ranks melted away before its withering showers. Thundering tones shook all the mountain heights, echoing and breaking among the gorges, with terrific grandeur; while answering them went up the shouts of man and officer, the firm, clear words of command, and the quick clashing of arms. The gallant Harney, regardless of personal danger, cheered on his men, rushing along their front, through showers of death that rained on every side. Animated by his voice and example, the troops breasted the murderous storm, reached the parapet and leaped over among their enemies. Then the cannon ceased, and there were a few moments of terrible silence, succeeded by the ringing of bayonets, and the groans of the dying. The struggle was short. Dismayed by the impetuous charge, the enemy either threw down their arms or broke and fled down the southern ascent to the main road. Generals Santa Anna, Canalizo, and Almonte, escaped to Jalapa. Twiggs's division, headed by Harney and Childs, continued in close pursuit of the fugitives, until late in the afternoon.

So conspicuous was the conduct of Colonel Harney, during the whole of this terrible charge, that immediately after the enemy's works had been carried, and while all around was confusion and wild pursuit, General Scott rode up to the colonel and exclaimed, "Colonel Harney, I cannot now adequately express my admiration of your gallant achievement, but I shall take pleasure in soon thanking you



General Scott complimenting Col. Harney,

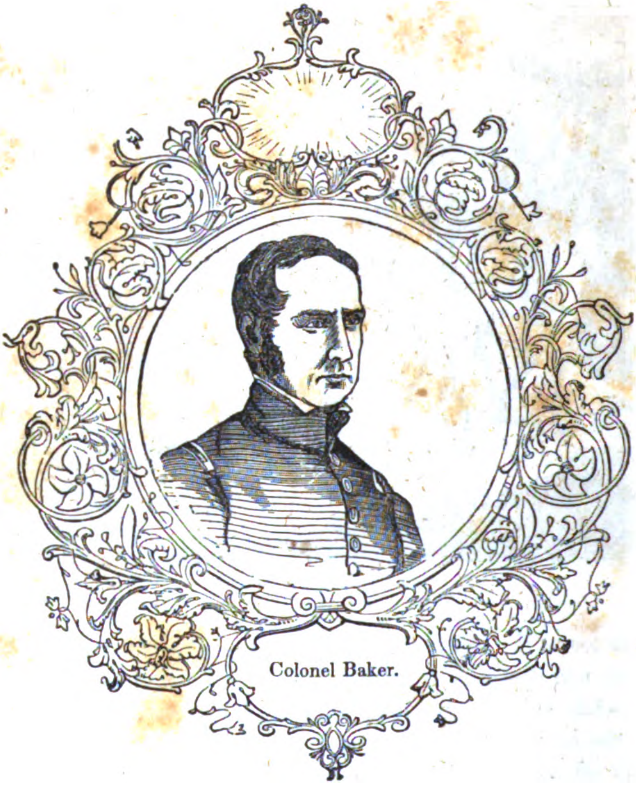


General Shields wounded.

in proper terms." With characteristic modesty, Harney replied that the praise was due less to himself than to his officers and men.

Meanwhile General Shields, with his volunteers, had stormed and carried the height to the west, and marching down rapidly into the road, cut off the retreat of the fugitives from Cerro Gordo. In the commencement of the action, the general was paralyzed by a musket-ball which passed through his lungs. Colonel Baker then took command of his division, and conducted the pursuit.

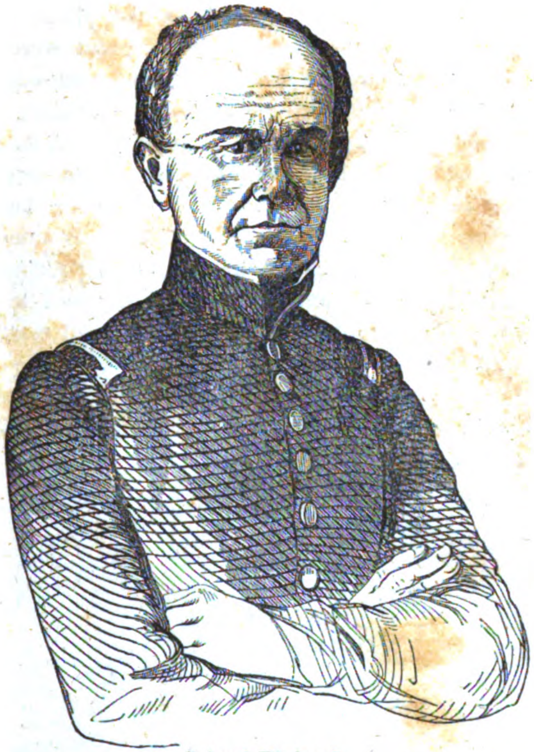
At the same time General Pillow had attacked the strong positions of the enemy, situated on the plateau. General La Vega received him with a galling fire, but without being able to check his advance. The column was led by Haskell's regiment of Tennessee volunteers, followed by the other regiments of the brigade. When near La Vega's position, the advance suddenly received a heavy fire from a masked battery, which drove it back with great loss. Pillow restored his line and again ordered it forward. The troops advanced with spirit; but the Mexicans, animated by their former success, poured forth so terrible a discharge from all their batteries, that they again drove back the assailants. At this time the American flag was observed on Cerro Gordo, and judging it useless to resist further, General La Vega surrendered. The force of the Americans at Cerro Gordo was about eight thousand five hundred; their loss was thirty-three officers and three hundred and ninety eight men—total four



Colonel Baker.

hundred and eighty-three; of whom sixty-three were killed. The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded was never known, but during the battle it no doubt equalled that of their antagonists, and in the retreat was greatly augmented by the slaughter committed among the fugitives by Harney's dragoons. The amount of ammunition, arms, military stores, and prisoners captured was so great, that in General Scott's language, the victors were "embarrassed with the results of victory,—prisoners of war," says the commander, "heavy ordnance, field batteries, small arms, and accoutrements. About three thousand men laid down their arms, with the usual proportion of field and company officers, besides five generals, several of them of great distinction,—Pinzon, Jarrero, La Vega, Noriaga, and Abando. A sixth general, Vasquez, was killed in defending the battery (tower) in the rear of the whole Mexican army, the capture of which gave us those glorious results."

As the great number of prisoners was an insupportable burden to the army, General Scott released them all on parole, except a few



Colonel Hitchcock.

officers, who chose to remain under the good treatment of the American government. All the private effects were restored to their owners, and the small arms and some ammunition destroyed. The duty of receiving the paroles of the Mexican officers was intrusted to Colonel Hitchcock, inspector-general of the army, who also furnished provisions for the prisoners.

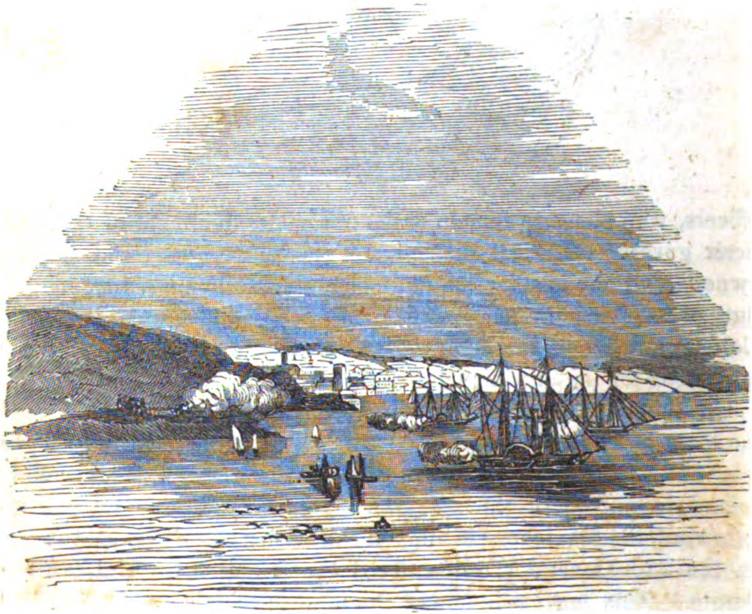
On the same day that the victory of Cerro Gordo was achieved, the town of Tuspan was captured with but slight resistance by a portion of the gulf squadron. On the following day Twiggs entered Jalapa, in pursuit of the flying enemy. On the same day and the following, the Mexicans abandoned the strong post of La Hoya; and on the 22d, General Worth entered the strong town and castle of Perote. This fortress is one of the most formidable in Mexico. It contained fifty-four pieces of cannon, bronze and iron mortars, eleven thousand cannon balls, fourteen thousand bombs, and five hundred muskets, all of which fell into the hands of the Americans.

On the 15th of May, General Worth approached the city of Puebla. He was met by a party of lancers, supposed to be led by Santa

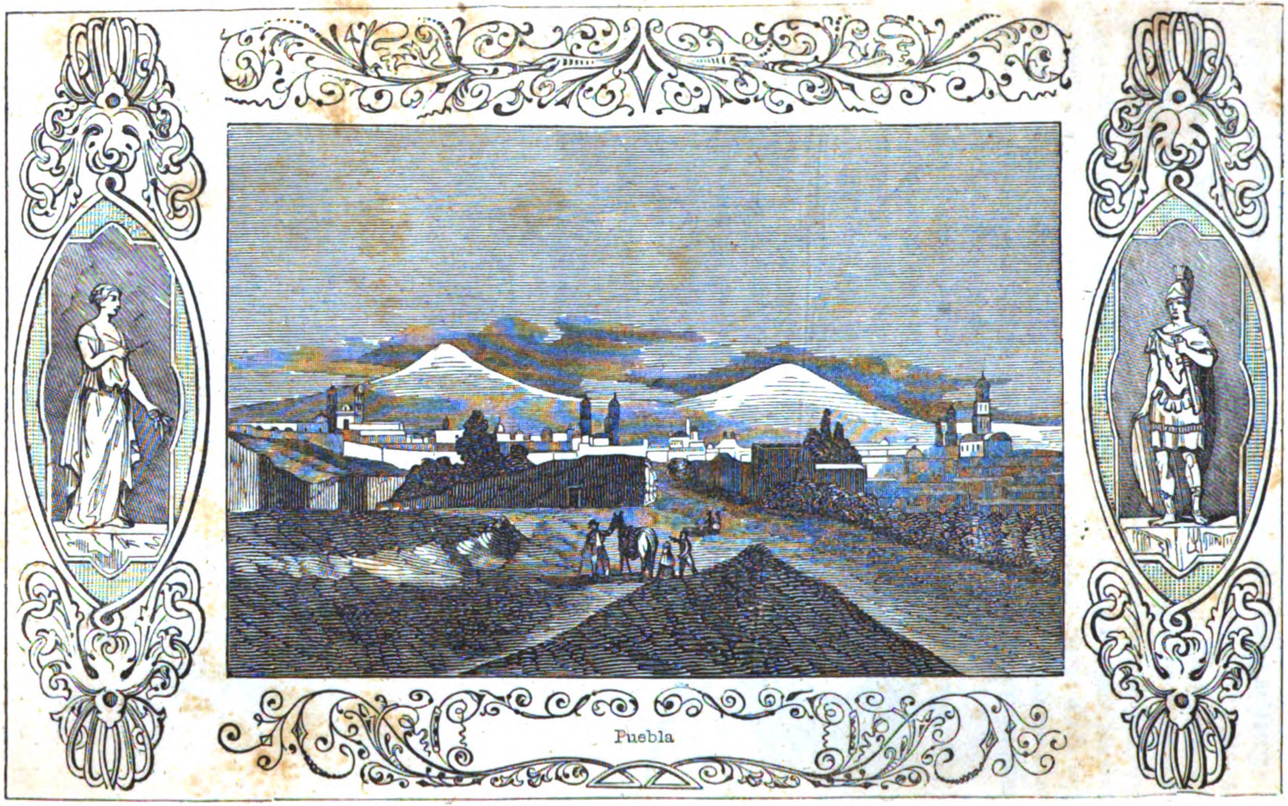
Anna, with whom a skirmish ensued, in the plains of Amasoca. After losing a few men, the enemy retreated, and were driven into the streets of Puebla, where they separated and escaped.

The city of Puebla is among the largest in Mexico, containing a population of eighty thousand souls. It is celebrated for its splendid cathedral—probably the most costly building in America—its numerous churches and priests, the beauty of its public buildings, the general good appearance of its streets and houses, its numerous places of amusement, and the richness of the surrounding scenery.

Thus in less than two months, General Scott and his army had captured three large cities, two castles, ten thousand men, more than seven hundred cannon, mostly new, and an immense quantity of shells, shot, and small arms. For rapidity of execution, these achievements have scarcely a parallel, except in Napoleon's first Italian campaign.



Capture of Tuspan.



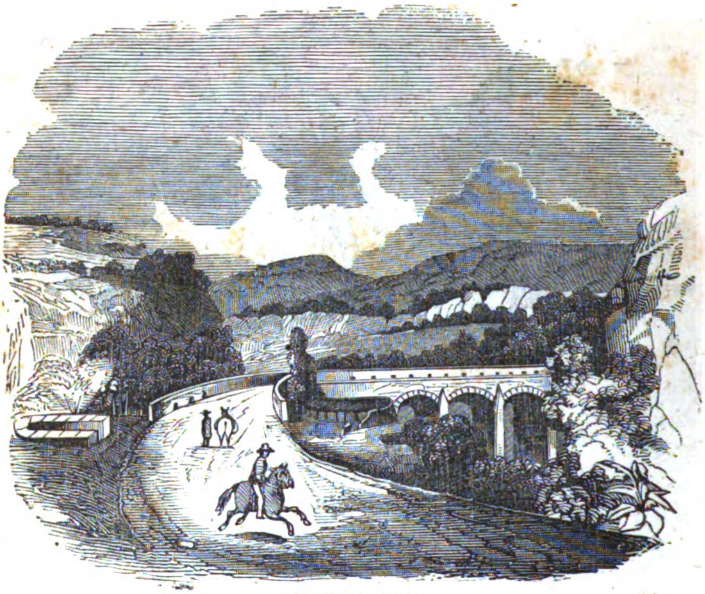
Puebla

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE GUERRILLA WARFARE.

AFTER the fall of Vera Cruz, the Mexican government authorized the organization of small bands of citizens and villagers, armed and mounted. They were termed "guerrilla parties," and being composed mostly of outlaws and robbers—the dregs of the population—they entered upon the campaign with the avowed determination to extend no quarter to any who might fall into their hands, but to rob and murder as often as occasion offered. Spreading themselves over the country through which the route of the Americans extended, they seized the mountain fastnesses and strong passes, attacked scouting parties, intercepted communications, and even entered garrisoned cities at night, and murdered all American stragglers within their reach. Some of their attempts were so daring and serious, as to be deserving of particular record.

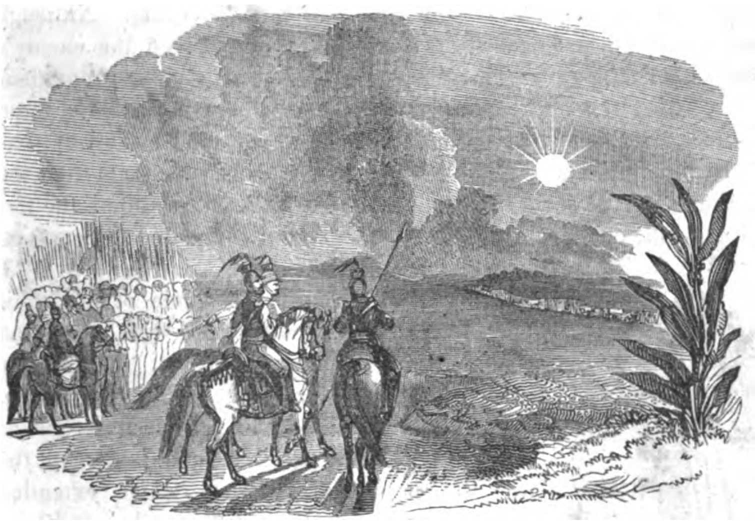
Early in May, a party of infantry were attacked near the National Bridge, and obliged to fall back upon their wagon train. Here they rallied, and charged on the guerrillas, who were dispersed with con-



National Bridge.

siderable loss. One American was killed. On the same day, no less than twenty-one bodies were found on the road, of those who had been murdered by the rancheros. Not long after, some unknown persons of General Taylor's army entered a rancho near Seralvo, and hung nearly forty Mexicans. Generals Taylor and Wool made the most strenuous exertions to discover the perpetrators of this outrage, but without success. On receiving news of the murder, General Canales issued a proclamation declaring the whole eastern country under martial law, and that no quarter should be extended to any American.

On the 22d of May, Colonel Sowers reached Vera Cruz with despatches from General Scott, then approaching Puebla. On the same day, with an escort of five men and Lieutenant McDonnell, he set out for Santa Fe, hoping to find Captain Wheat there, from whom he expected further reinforcements. Being disappointed, he set out with two additional men, but was attacked on the road by the guerrillas, and himself and six men murdered. The survivor escaped to carry the sad news to Vera Cruz. About the same time, Captain Walker, with eight hundred men, while escorting a wagon train, was attacked by two hundred rancheros, whom he charged, capturing six, killing ten, and pursuing the remainder as far as the darkness of night would admit. The 2d dragoons, who accompanied Walker, had six killed

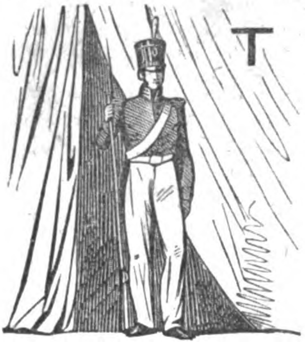


Mexican Cavalry menacing a train of Wagons.

and eleven wounded, a loss which induced them to shoot the prisoners taken by Walker.

On the night of June 4th, eight hundred men, under Colonel McIntosh, started from Vera Cruz for Puebla, with a train of one hundred and fifty wagons, and six hundred mules. He had with him two hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars in specie. On Sunday, the 6th of June, the advance guard, consisting of Captain Ford's Indiana dragoons, was suddenly attacked by a large body of Mexicans, who killed two and wounded five or six others. This threw the American front into confusion, and enabled the enemy to follow up their success by capturing several horses and a large quantity of baggage. The troops were just recovering from this unexpected assault, when in about half an hour the rear of the train was attacked, and before the guard, who were unfortunately too far behind, could get up, they had lost a large number of pack mules, and several wagons were robbed of their contents. The assailants then retired into the neighbouring chaparral, where it was impossible to pursue them.

The train was now arranged in order, the mounted dragoons placed as a rear guard, and the whole again moved forward. At sunset they reached a low part of the road, bordered on the left by an open chaparral, and on the right by a field, set with thickets, and commanded on the farther end by a small fort situated on a hill. The stillness of this lonely spot was suddenly broken by heavy discharges of musketry, while from the fort, the hill in its rear, and the rows of chaparral, blazed forth sheets of blinding flame. Although the Americans were mostly raw recruits, they received the enemy's fire with coolness, and poured forth in return a volley from their rifles. After this had continued for some minutes, they charged upon the chaparral in rear of the adjoining field, and after a short but exciting struggle, silenced the Mexicans' fire, and drove them from the thicket. At the same time, the dragoons rushed down upon the fort on the hill, entered it amid loud shouts, and compelled the garrison to fly in confusion over the neighbouring heights.



THROUGHOUT the whole of this affair the Mexicans behaved with more than usual skill and bravery. During the confusion incident to the first attack, they avoided the American troops as much as possible, and fell upon the wagons and mules, which extended over a distance of four miles, and having the guard of four hundred men weakened by extension. They were thus enabled to capture twenty-eight wagons, and nearly two hundred pack mules. The loss of the Americans during this week, in specie alone, was more than fifty thousand dollars. Thirty men were killed. Colonel McIntosh halted at Paso de Obijas, and despatched a courier to General Cadwalader, at Vera Cruz, for supplies.

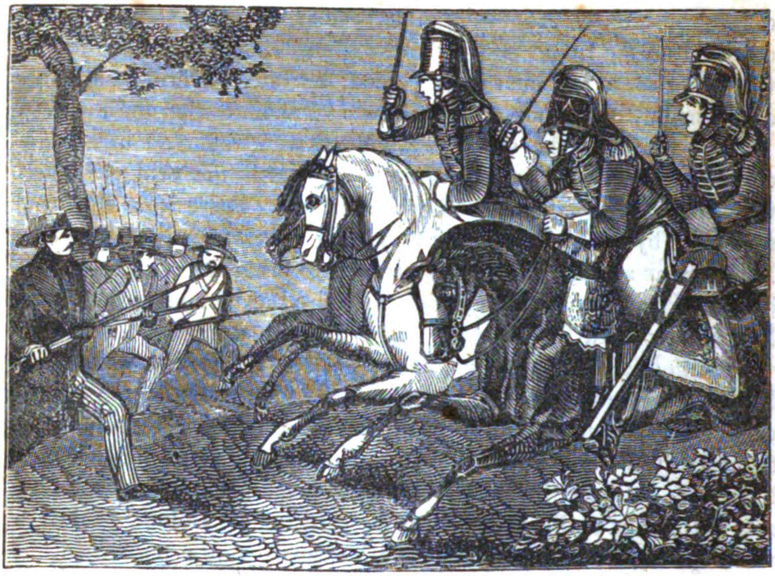
This action encouraged the guerrillas to such an extent that they spread themselves between Vera Cruz and General Scott's head-quarters, cut off the communication, and occupied all the strong positions in the vicinity. Strong bodies entered Vera Cruz at night, and drove off numbers of horses: scouting parties were attacked, and sometimes murdered; while it became almost impossible to travel with a train without its being accompanied by a large escort.

On the 8th, a small recruiting party of Americans, with some citizens and disbanded soldiers, numbering in all one hundred and fifty, left Puebla for Vera Cruz. It was conducted by Captain Bainbridge, of the 3d artillery. On approaching Cerro Gordo, two officers were fired upon from the chaparral in the rear of the train, and soon after the captain was informed that the pass was guarded by four thousand Mexicans. After halting at the mouth of the pass, and organizing, the party passed through without meeting the enemy, and arrived that evening at the National Bridge. The troops were now so much fatigued as to be unable to furnish a guard; but, while preparing to bivouac, they received information that some persons were barricading the bridge. About the same time signal lights were distinctly observed on the ridges and cliffs near Cerro Gordo. In order to prevent surprise, a few men were placed between the bridge and the encampment, but no attempt was made on them during the night.

Before daylight the sick and wounded were removed to a place of safety, and two parties despatched towards the bridge, one of which cleared it without meeting the enemy. These were followed soon after by the main body. Every thing appearing safe, Lieutenant McWilliams and a Mr. Frazer were sent to bring the train across the bridge. While on their way, they were fired at by about twenty-five Mexicans, posted on a ridge. The wagon-master and four others were killed, and a wagon captured. Immediately after a party of lancers appeared on the bridge, and prepared for a charge; but on perceiving that Captain Bainbridge's party were ready to receive them, they hastily retired. Placing his troops in order, the captain resumed his march, followed by several hundred lancers, who hung upon his rear and flanks until he arrived at the pass, where Colonel McIntosh was awaiting reinforcements. The Mexicans were a portion of the same party that had attacked the colonel and cut off his train, and during the whole night they kept up a continual fire upon the camp, often approaching very near to the American sentinels.

ON the following day Bainbridge's party resumed its march to Vera Cruz, in company with Captain Duperu's dragoons, who returned to obtain their horses. It had been owing to the bravery of this company that McIntosh's command was not entirely cut off or dispersed during the fierce attack of the lancers. On arriving at Santa Fe, the dragoons halted, in order to protect a large return train, at that time threatened; and meanwhile Captain Bainbridge pushed on to Vera Cruz, where he arrived in safety. The threatened assault upon Duperu's command was made; but, although the enemy were greatly superior, he succeeded in driving them back with loss, and arrived safely at Vera Cruz.

On the day that Captain Bainbridge's command left McIntosh's camp, General Cadwalader reached it with eight hundred men, and two howitzers. The two commands, numbering about one thousand men, were then joined, and moved forward towards the National

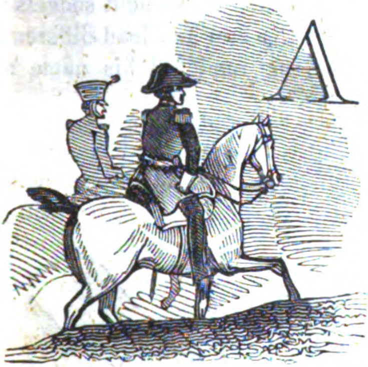


Captain Duperu's Dragoons attacking the Guerrillas.

Bridge. He led his troops over the commanding heights from which the enemy had made their attack, so as to be on even ground with the Mexicans in case of a second assault. The Americans were not long in suspense. A heavy fire from all the neighbouring ridges and chaparral, soon announced that a large force had collected to dispute his passage. The command was halted, and the two howitzers placed in a position to rake the thickets. A furious action ensued, which lasted several hours, and was terminated only by a charge into the chaparral. After a short struggle, the Mexicans retreated, leaving behind them, in killed and wounded, about one hundred men. The loss of the Americans was thirteen killed and between thirty and forty wounded. Cadwalader passed the bridge, and proceeded on his way to Jalapa.

Colonel De Russy, with one hundred and twenty-eight men, was sent, on the 7th of July, from Tampico, by Colonel Gates, commandant at that place, to Huejutla, to ask of the Mexican general, Garay, the liberation of some prisoners of war entitled to release. On reaching a point eight miles from Tantayuca, and one mile from the Calabosa river, he met a Mexican Indian, from whom information was received that General Garay was in force at that river, and meditated an attack upon the party. Nearly at the same moment, shots were heard in advance, the Mexicans having fired upon and killed Captain Boyd, leader of the pioneer party, and six of his men.

The main body of the Americans then charged the enemy in three columns, driving them, from their left and right, to the opposite side of the river, where they formed in one body. In this position the battle continued for an hour, Captain Wyse gallantly serving the only piece belonging to the company, and acting with the greatest coolness throughout the whole engagement. The enemy were finally beaten off, and the Americans commenced their retreat to Tantayuca. The Mexicans were now reinforced by numerous small parties of citizens and guerrillas, and a running fight ensued, which was maintained until the Americans had regained their magazine—a distance of twelve miles. On arriving at Tantayuca they dispersed a force of the enemy stationed there, and entering the town, provided themselves with arms and ammunition, and also stripped it of provisions and other stores.



At nine o'clock in the evening, a summons for capitulation arrived from General Garay. The demand was refused; but an agreement was made to meet the general in the plaza at ten o'clock. Captain Wyse repaired to the place at the time appointed, and waited until midnight without receiving any intelligence of the Mexican officer.

At two o'clock on the morning of the 13th, the Americans left their camp, and marched for the Panuco road amid a heavy rain. At ten A.M., they were pursued by the Mexicans, and a running action commenced, and was continued over a space of fifty miles. The loss of the Americans, during the whole affair, was fifteen killed, ten wounded, and three missing; that of the enemy is unknown. In the latter end of June, eight of the prisoners confined by General Garay made their escape to the American quarters.

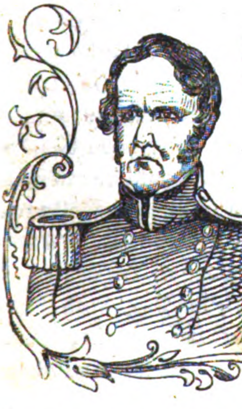
In July, General Pierce left Vera Cruz to join Scott's army, having with him twenty-five hundred men, one hundred and fifty wagons, seven hundred mules, and one million dollars in specie. At the National Bridge he was attacked by fourteen hundred Mexicans, and a severe battle ensued, which terminated in the defeat of the enemy. Their loss was one hundred and fifty—that of the Americans, thirty killed and wounded. After returning to Vera Cruz for artillery and reinforcements, the general marched forward, and reached Puebla on the 6th of August, one day previous to Scott's march upon the capital.

On the 10th of August, a party of Americans, under Major Lally, was attacked near the National Bridge, by the guerrillas. The skirmish was severe, the major being attacked in front and rear, and losing many men. He maintained his ground, however, with vigour, and finally drove off the enemy. A short time previous to this, an engagement had taken place between Captain Ruff's cavalry and the guerrillas, in which he was eminently victorious, not losing a man.

These attacks of the guerrillas kept the region between Vera Cruz and Puebla in a state of constant alarm, and rendered travelling, except with a strong escort, in the highest degree dangerous. The most active and daring of these partisans was the celebrated Father Jarauta, a priest, who had organized most of the parties, and who seems to have been considered as their general leader. Vigilant exertions were made to capture him by Captain Walker, and General Patterson, who was then stationed at Vera Cruz, but without success; and, until the close of the war, he continued to arm and lead different bands, whose rapid and fearless movements rendered his name a terror in that neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XXVII.

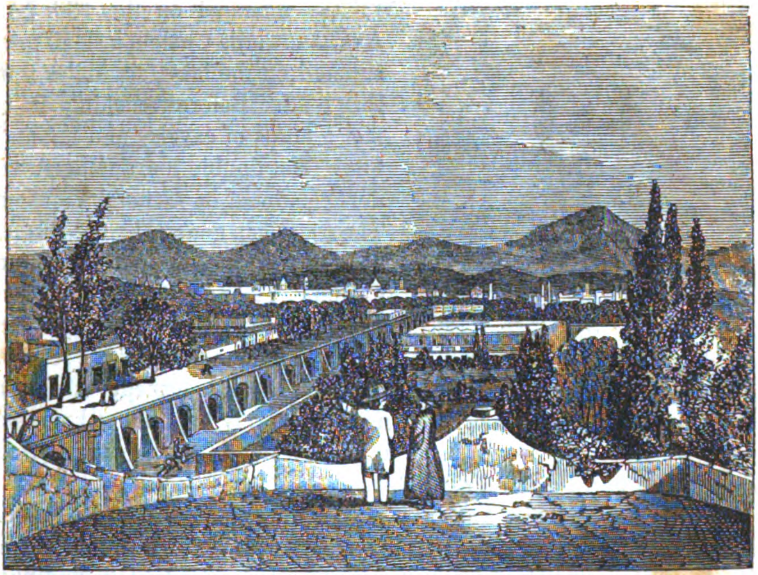
MARCH TO THE CAPITAL, AND BATTLE OF CONTRERAS.



GENERAL SCOTT, with the main portion of the army, remained at Puebla until early in August, when he prepared for a march upon the capital. A sufficient garrison was left in the city under Colonel Childs. On the 7th, Twiggs's division, preceded by Harney's brigade of cavalry, moved for the capital; and was followed, on the three succeeding days, by the divisions of Quitman, Worth, and Pillow, the corps being at no time more than five hours' march, or supporting distance, apart. On the first day, the troops entered a beautiful rolling country, of great fertility, covered with gardens, which supplied the inhabitants with food, and surrounded by lofty mountains, capped with snow. Among these Popocatapetl and Iscatapetl were so near as to render the morning and evening air quite chilly. The fields were covered with the beautiful maguey plant, through the rows of which, as the road gradually ascended, the long lines of soldiers, followed by their immense baggage train, exhibited a noble spectacle. The second day's march ascended through defiles, narrow passes, and deep chasms, succeeded by thick woods of the finest forest trees, with here and there beautiful little lakes embosomed among quiet valleys, with their cool deep waters glittering in the southern sun. On the third day, the advance reached the strong pass of Rio Frio, where the enemy had been reported in force. At this place, the mountains which skirt the road on the left, close upon it for about a mile, overhanging and enfilading it completely, and affording excellent coverings for an enemy's marksmen. It was passed without meeting the enemy, and the troops commenced the ascent of the ridge, which separates the plains of Puebla from the valley of Mexico. After winding along this for several miles, a sudden turn in the road brought the army within full sight of the vast plain of Mexico, in the centre of which lay the goal of ambition, the object of so many fatiguing marches, with its lofty cathedral, its checkered domes, its frowning walls, and bright embosoming lakes. The army passed the night in sight of the city.

On the following day, the troops descended into the great valley or basin of Mexico, the different divisions approximating more closely than they had done in any part of the march. The road ran through Lake Chalco and Xochimilco on the south, and Lake Tezcuco on the north. Close to the latter, and on the opposite side of the road, was the isolated mound, called El Penon, of great height, strongly fortified, by a triple row of works, and flooded around the base by sluices from the lakes, and heavy rains. It is eight miles from the capital, and commands the advance to it, from the east. A careful reconnoissance of this place, made on the 13th and 14th, convinced General Scott that an attempt to carry it, even if successful, would be attended by great and disproportionate loss, and have a chilling effect upon the subsequent battles, anticipated before the city walls. This was confirmed by another reconnoissance upon Mexicalzingo, left of Penon, a village at a fortified bridge across the canal, leading from Lake Xochimilco to the capital. This could have been carried after masking El Penon; but on the other side of the bridge, the Americans would have found themselves on a narrow causeway four miles from the road flanked on the right and left by boggy grounds.

These difficulties caused the general to abandon the idea of a direct



City of Mexico, from the Convent of San Cosmo.

march upon the city, and to avoid the eastern defences, by passing round the western and southern shores of Lakes Chalco and Xochimilco, at the foot of the hills and mountains, so as to reach the village of San Augustin, and there conduct a reconnoissance upon the city.

Accordingly, by a sudden retrograde movement, the army commenced its march on the 18th, Worth's division, with Harney in advance, composing the van. Twiggs's troops were left at Ayotla until next day, in order to threaten Penon and Mexicalzingo, so as to deceive the enemy as long as possible. The route lay over a field of lava, broken into rocks, chasms, and deep ravines, many of which, on account of the rainy season, were filled with water; but notwithstanding these difficulties, the advance under Worth reached San Augustin on the 18th.*

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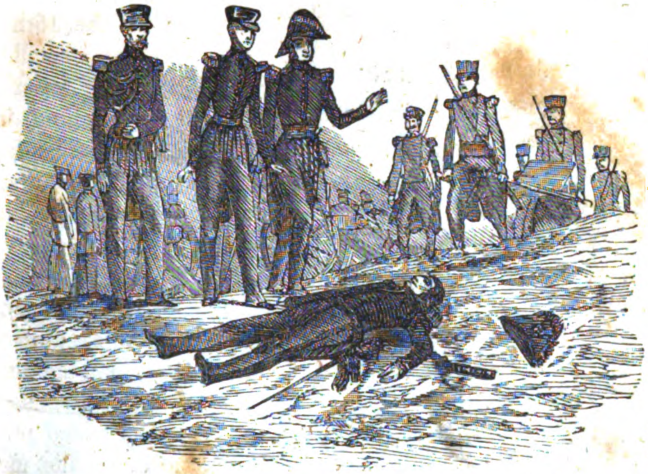
* The march of the American army around Lake Chalco must be regarded as one of the most scientific operations of the war. Santa Anna had good reason to believe that such a step was impossible, and few generals besides the American commander would have attempted it. The reward was commensurate with the labour of achievement; for besides its resulting in the subsequent glorious battles, it enabled our army to escape the terrible batteries of Penon and Mexicalzingo, the first of which mounted fifty-three guns, and the second, thirty-eight. General Scott, throughout the whole of this splendid campaign, exhibited all the characteristics of a most able commander-in-chief. All his dispositions for action were marked by the most consummate science and ability; but in none did he display these qualities to greater advantage than in the arrangements for the final attack on the capital and its defences.

TWIGGS marched on the 16th from Ayotla towards Chalco, a small town situated on the lake, six miles from the road. Before reaching it he met a corps of cavalry and infantry, more than double his numbers, under command of General Valencia. The American general halted, formed in line, and opened upon them from Captain Taylor's field-battery, by which many of the cavalry were killed and wounded, and the remainder dispersed. Except this skirmish the army experienced no further molestation during the march, save from guerrillas on the heights.

A little north of San Augustin, is the village of San Antonio, which had been strongly fortified by the enemy, with field-works, containing heavy guns, and a numerous garrison. It could be turned only on the left by infantry, who would be obliged to advance over a field covered with volcanic rocks and lava. A careful reconnoissance evinced that the point could be approached only from the front over a narrow causeway, flanked with wet ditches of great depth. Towards evening, while Captain Thornton with a small party were examining the works, a masked battery opened upon them, killed the captain and wounded his guide.

On the same day a reconnoissance was commenced to the left of San Augustin, first over the different mounds, and farther on over the same field of volcanic rocks and lava, which had been partially traversed in the route around Lake Chalco. This was continued on the 19th by Captain Lee, assisted by Lieutenants Beauregard and Tower. Other divisions coming up, Pillow's was advanced to make a practical road for heavy artillery, and Twiggs's thrown farther in front, to cover that operation. These movements resulted in the battle of Contreras.

San Augustin, at which the American army was then stationed, is a small village, situated on the road leading from Southern Mexico to the capital, about ten miles from the latter. Being in the north of a broken volcanic valley, access to it is extremely difficult, and the movement of cavalry across it, impossible. On the rocks which border the western side of this valley, is the strong post of Contreras, which the Mexicans had fortified in the most careful manner, and furnished with a large garrison. About the same distance north of

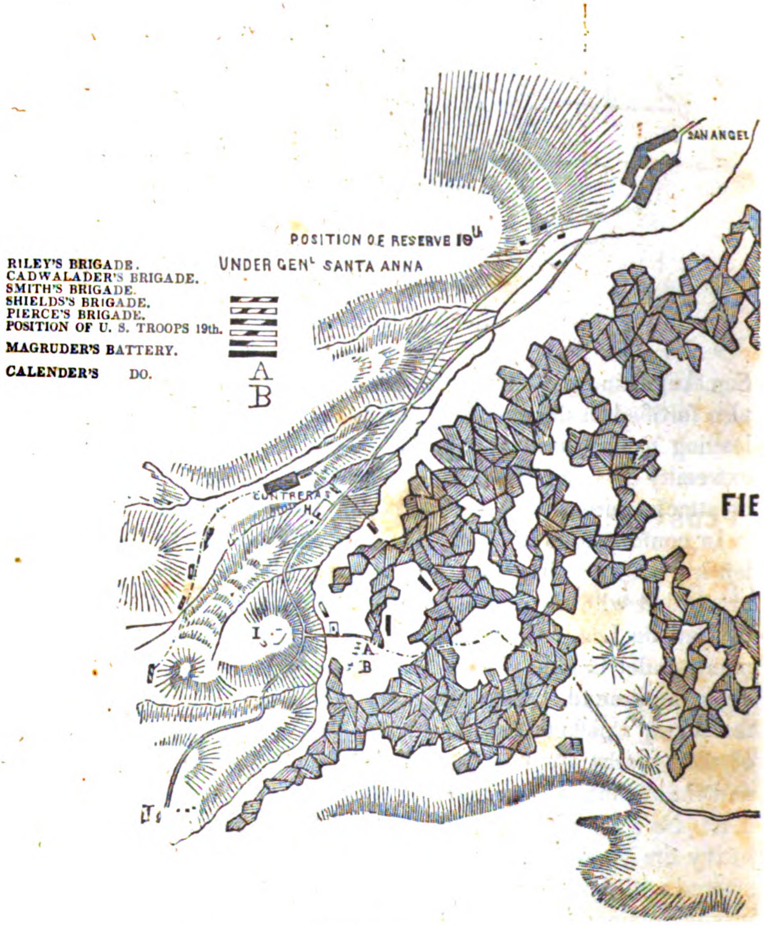


Death of Captain Thornton.

San Augustin, and on the same road, is the fortress of Churubusco, also fortified in the strongest manner. West of this, and on the road leading to Contreras is San Angel, and east of it, near the northern extremity of Lake Xochimilco, San Pablo. These were the points of attack, during the great battles of August 19th and 20th.

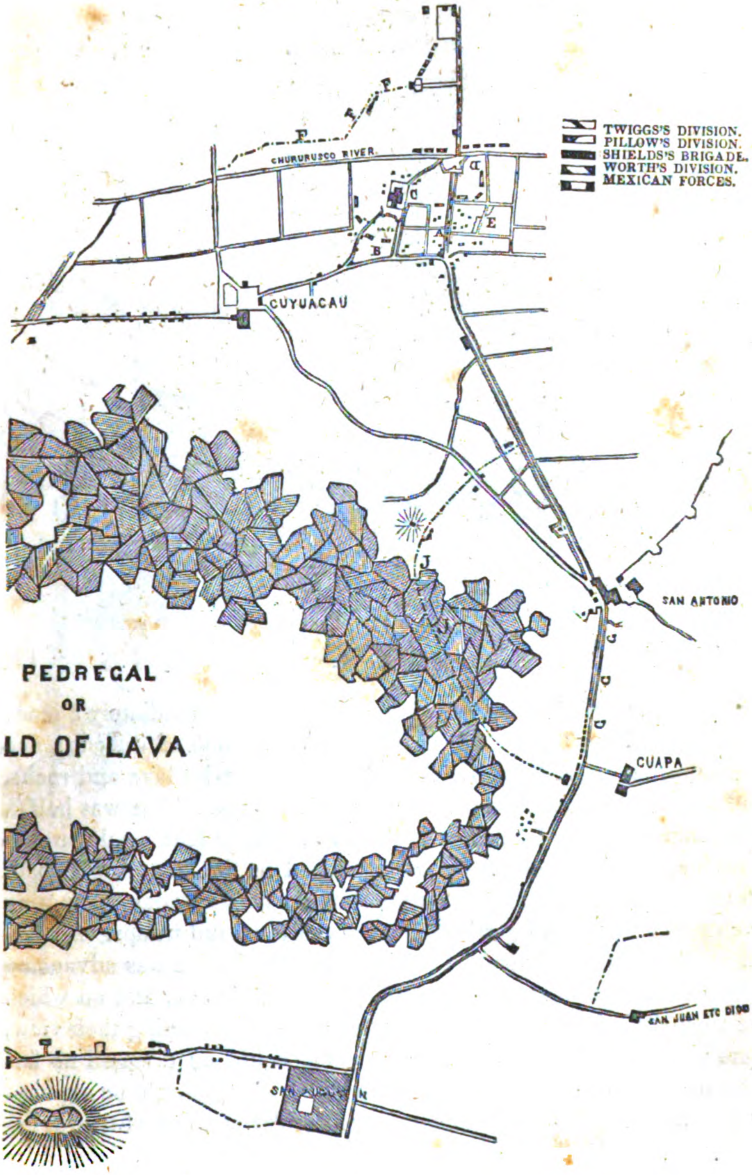
In conformity to the orders of the general-in-chief, General Twiggs left his wagon train at San Augustin on the morning of the 19th, and proceeded with his division across the mountain route reconnoitered by Captain Lee. On arriving within sight of Contreras, a rifle regiment, under Colonel Loring, was ordered forward as skirmishers, to clear the ground. This was done safely and with despatch. After the enemy's pickets had been driven in to within three hundred yards of their works, Captain Lee placed in position, Magruder's battery and the mountain howitzer and rocket battery of Lieutenant Callender. No sooner had this been done, than the Mexicans opened a heavy fire from several of their large guns. The Americans answered with both batteries, and for several hours a severe cannonade was maintained, which proved most destructive to Twiggs's troops. The gallant Lieutenant Johnstone, of Magruder's battery, was mortally wounded, and Lieutentant Callender, severely; and so great was the loss of artillerymen and officers, that the batteries were at length withdrawn, and placed under shelter. General Smith's brigade was now ordered to advance along the American batteries, and gain a position in the enemy's rear, and turn the position of San Antonio. The troops advanced over a field of lava, scarcely passable, even for single individuals, until they came within range of the Mexi-

PLAN
OF THE
BATTLES OF CONTRERAS AND CHURUBUSCO.
AUGUST 19 and 20, 1847.


SAN ANGEL
POSITION OF RESERVE 19th
UNDER GENL SANTA ANNA
RILEY'S BRIGADE.
CADWALADER'S BRIGADE.
SMITH'S BRIGADE.
SHIELDS'S BRIGADE.
PIERCE'S BRIGADE.
POSITION OF U. S. TROOPS 19th.
MAGRUDER'S BATTERY.
CALENDER'S DO.
A
B
CONTRERAS
H
I
A
B
FIE

REFERENCES.

A. Duncan's battery.
B. Taylor's do.
C. Convent Church.
D. Tete de Pont.
E. Churubusco, Aug. 20.
F. F. F. Route of Shields's and Pierce's brigades.
G. G. G. Col. Garland's route with his brigade.
H. Anseldo.
I. August 20.
J. J. J. Route of Clarke's brigade.
F. Magdalena.


TWIGGS'S DIVISION.
PILLOW'S DIVISION.
SHIELDS'S BRIGADE.
WORTH'S DIVISION.
MEXICAN FORCES.
CHURURUSCO RIVER.
F
F
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SAN JUAN ETC DIOS
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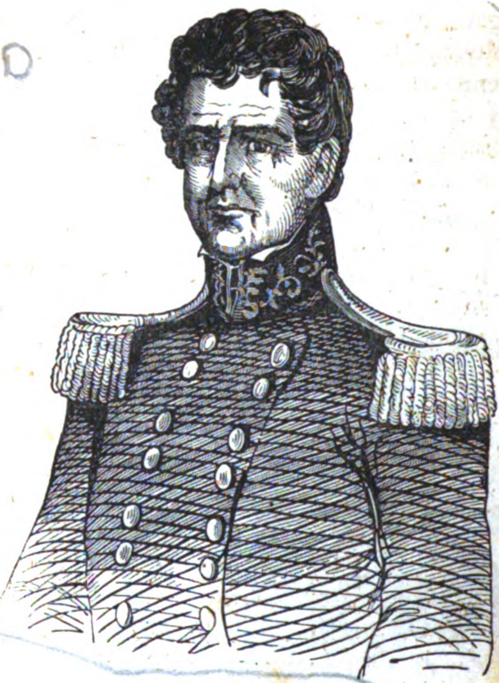


General Persifer F. Smith.

can batteries on the San Angel road. These immediately opened their fire. The situation of the Americans was one of difficulty and exposure, being by the edge of a field, covered with lava and rocks, and utterly impassable, even to a single footman. This was half a mile, and terminated on the other side, in a slope leading down into a ravine, whose opposite edge was flanked by the San Angel road. Here had been erected the strong fortress of Contreras, mounting twenty-two guns, and garrisoned by seven thousand troops. A careful reconnoissance disclosed to General Smith, that he was advancing by the only path that crossed the broken bed of lava, and on which the enemy, having cleared away all the bushes obstructing their view, were prepared to receive him. The guns could be dragged no farther, and the infantry, in its march down the slope, would be exposed to a terrible fire, without knowing whether the crossing of the ravine below was possible. In this dilemma, with his brigade isolated from the division, Smith resolved to abandon the direct march, and try one of the enemy's flanks.

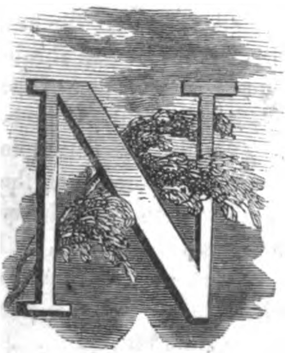
In order to cover this movement, Captain Magruder opened his fire in front, while a select company of infantry, artillery, and mounted riflemen, passed behind his pieces and filed off towards the

Mexican right. After crossing a rock of nearly a mile in length with great difficulty, the troops descended towards the village of Encelda, near Contreras. Here they were greeted with the sight of an immense body of troops, approaching the fort from the capital, and gradually forming on the slope of the ravine, at the opposite side of the village. An immediate action was now anticipated, but, instead of pausing, the Americans continued their march, crossing two small streams, at the bottom of deep and difficult gulleys, and entering the village. Here they were gratified by the sight of four regiments of Pillow's division, under General Cadwalader, who immediately placed himself under the orders of General Smith.

THE village of Encelda is separated from the main road by a ravine, through which runs a small stream of water. On the road, and between it and the stream, are a garden and house, surrounded by a high and tolerably strong stone wall. The village is intersected by narrow lanes, running between high dikes, which inclose gardens of trees and shrubbery, and in the centre of the whole is an old stone church. As the trees and sides of the lanes afforded excellent protection to the soldiers, General Smith drew up Cadwalader's forces on the outer edge of the village, facing the enemy, placed the 3d infantry and rifles in column on their right flank, garrisoned the church, and stationed Major Dimick's regiment in the garden on the road, to secure that avenue and the rear of the brigade. In this position, the Americans firmly awaited the threatened attack of the enemy.

The latter had formed opposite the village in two lines, the infantry being in front, and the cavalry in the rear; the whole numbering, probably, two thousand men. It was now after sunset, and the heavy clouds and chilly feeling of the atmosphere, foretold a severe storm. Suddenly, to the great joy of the Americans, Colonel Riley, who had been sent by Twiggs to favour Smith's movement, arrived with his brigade. He had crossed the ravine, and gone up towards Contreras, driving before him at intervals strong parties of the enemy. With this accession to his force, General Smith determined to become the assailant, and accordingly placed Riley's troops in column on the left, and Cadwalader's on the right, in order to attack the enemy's right, but before the troops could be disengaged from the gardens and thickets, the darkness was so great that the enemy's line could not be seen, and the order to attack was countermanded. General Cadwalader's troops again took position on the outer edge of the village; Riley's brigade parallel to them in a long line inside; the rifles, under Major Loring, on his right, and the 3d infantry in the churchyard.

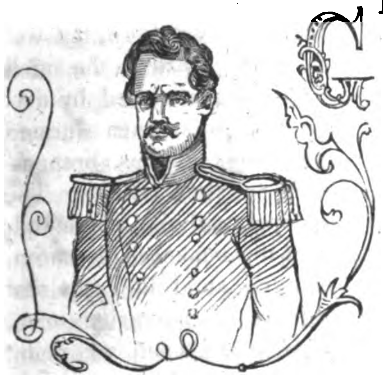
The night was a terrible one. The rainy season having set in some time before the arrival of the American army, the soil had been rendered damp and marshy by excessive rains, and the crevices of the rocks, as well as the numerous ravines, filled in many places with water. These formed the only resting-places for the greater part of the troops, in addition to which a heavy rain fell during the evening and night of the 19th. No fires were kindled, and many of the soldiers were without blankets; even the officers remained in the field, with no other covering than their military coats. The air, which, during the day, had been somewhat sultry, was now cold and piercing, so that, altogether, the bivouac preceding the battle of Contreras was one of the most distressing that the army of General Scott ever experienced in Mexico.



NOR were the feelings and prospects of the soldiers such as to afford them much encouragement respecting the operations of the coming day. General Smith's men alone were surrounded, except in the rear, by at least eighteen thousand troops, carrying nearly thirty pieces of cannon, and including in their number six thousand cavalry. They themselves numbered but three thousand three hundred, destitute of both cavalry and artillery. The unsuccessful attack of the previous day had dispirited the whole army, and rendered the most active operations on the part of General Smith necessary, even to maintain his position. Should he be forced to abandon this, the entire plan of the commanding general would be deranged, and the moral effect of such derangement upon the army would be most unfortunate. But, even were these difficulties removed, could General Smith successfully defend his position, this would do but little towards furthering the designs of General Scott, since the enemy, even if repulsed, would be at full liberty to withdraw their forces and direct them upon some other point. On the other hand, an attempt to act offensively would leave his rear exposed to the whole cavalry force then hanging upon it, who, in case of a successful attack, would meet with no further opposition in their descent upon the village.

In this dilemma General Smith adopted the plan apparently the most desperate—that of marching from his camp before daylight, and renewing the attack upon Contreras. Lieutenant Tower had just arrived from a reconnoissance of the ravine in rear of that fort, and reported that he thought it practicable, in that direction, for the operations of infantry. The enemy's rear, therefore, was chosen as the point of attack. At the same time Captain Lee, of the engineers, volunteered to return to the general-in-chief, and inform him of the contemplated movement, as well as solicit a diversion to favour it and protect the rear. Three o'clock, A. M., of the 20th, was selected as the time of marching. Silent instructions of the plan and order of attack were communicated to the officers of brigades, with directions to form their commands, and have them ready for marching at half past two.

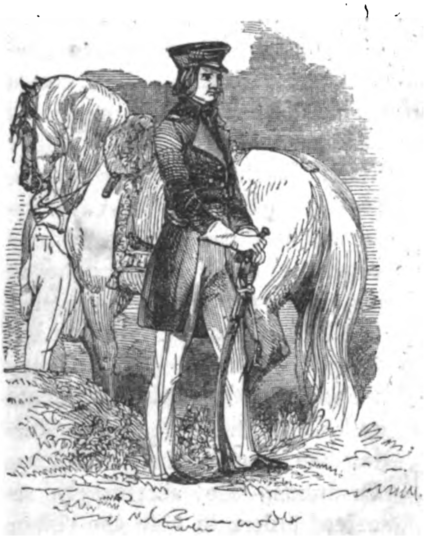
The arrangements, both for march and assault, being thus completed, there remained to the general no further source of anxiety save the defence of the village. From this he was unexpectedly relieved by the appearance of an aid to General Shields, who reported that that officer was on the opposite side of the ravine, in command of the New York and South Carolina volunteers.



GENERAL SHIELDS, being the superior officer, could have assumed immediate command, and acted upon Smith's plan as though his own. But this he generously declined to do, reporting himself to his brother officer, and choosing the important, though less brilliant task, of defending the village during the contemplated attack on Contreras. He accordingly received orders to hold the village of Encelda with his two regiments, cutting off the enemy's retreat from the fort, or opening upon the flank of their reserve, should it change front to the right, in order to assail the American camp.

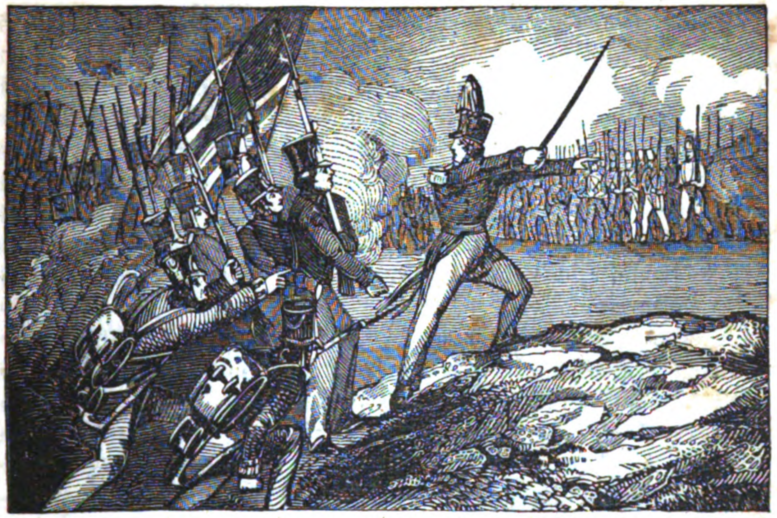
Just at three o'clock on the 20th, the troops, cold, wet, and hungry, commenced their march from the centre of the village. The rain continued without intermission, rendering the atmosphere so dark that an object six feet off could not be seen, and the rear of the column was prevented from going astray only by the troops marching within touch of each other. Riley's brigade formed the van, accompanied by Lieutenant Tower, who, during the night, had again reconnoitered the pass, in order to be satisfied of the practicability of the march. Cadwalader followed Colonel Riley, and the rear was brought up by Smith's own brigade, escorted by Lieutenant G. W. Smith, of the engineer company. The general was accompanied in person by Lieutenants Brooks and Beauregard, of the engineers.

Notwithstanding the weariness of the troops, and their miserable condition, consequent to the manner in which the night had been passed, they were obliged to march over a road of the utmost difficulty, jagged by stones and sharp pointed rocks, whose interstices were filled with mud and water. Although the march commenced at three o'clock, the day had dawned when the head of Cadwalader's brigade passed out of the village and began to form at the point where the path descends towards the ravine. Owing to the same cause, the command, during the march, was extended over a space of more than three times its length.



Colonel Riley.

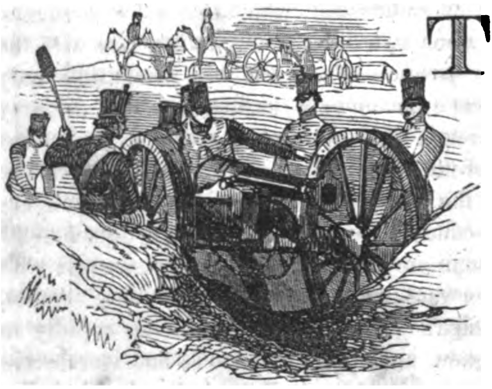
THE van now entered the ravine, proceeding cautiously until it reached a point from whence a charge might be made upon the rear of the works. Here it was halted, the rear closed up, the wet powder drawn from the small arms, and replaced by dry, and Riley's men formed into two columns, preparatory to the assault. The colonel, with his command, then recommenced his march, winding amid the crags and gulleys of the ravine, until, turning to his left and rising over the bank, he stood in full front of the Mexican rear, but sheltered from its fire by a slight acclivity. His ranks being in disorder, he again halted, reformed, and ascended the eminence. Here the whole battle-field broke upon his view, and instantly the booming of cannon from the fort, followed almost immediately by rapid discharges on his rear, showed him the danger through which he must pass, before reaching his object. This was the critical mo-



Storming of Contreras.

ment. Throwing forward his first two divisions as skirmishers, he shouted to his men to follow, and rushed towards the fort, supported by his whole command. The charge, in the very face of the enemy's fire, was one of the most brilliant actions of the war; and, as the remaining troops of Smith's command watched their comrades, they became excited to a pitch of enthusiasm, which, for a few moments, defied all discipline. The enemy's fire seemed to increase with the danger, until at length the position of the fort was discernible only by the thick cloud of smoke enveloping it, broken here and there by the glare of cannon. Through this murderous storm Riley hurried his shattered column, until they reached a cross ravine, close to the fort. Across this, under the brow of its slope, the rifles and engineer company had been thrown, so as to check the detachments outside. Here Riley's troops prepared for the decisive struggle with the bayonet, and rushing forward, were soon upon the enemy's works. At this moment, Cadwalader's whole force was moving rapidly to his support. Smith's brigade, under Major Dimick, had marched in the same direction; but, on arriving nearly opposite the fort, that officer observed a large body of the enemy on his left flank, and was ordered to change his route and attack it. This was done in the finest style. The 1st artillery and 3d infantry companies mounted the bank of the first ravine, rushed down the second and up its opposite bank, and met the enemy outside of the work, at the same moment that Riley's brigade poured into it. At such unexpected good fortune, the spirit and enthusiasm of the assailants rose to a pitch which rendered them totally insensible of danger. Riley's charge was irresistible. Every battery in the fort was silenced, the enemy were driven in huge masses from the walls, and were soon flying from the gates in utter confusion. Meanwhile their cavalry, drawn up on the outside for a charge, were attacked by Major Dimick's troops with the bayonet, their ranks broken, and both men and horses overwhelmed in irremediable slaughter. The rout was total. Thousands leaped headlong from the walls, and rushed across the fields and up the ravine, throwing from them, in reckless terror, arms and even clothing.

A pleasing incident connected with the capture of the fort deserves notice. Scarcely had Riley's colours been placed upon the works than the 4th artillery company seized upon the enemy's cannon. The very first pieces they laid hands on were two of those taken by Santa Anna at Buena Vista, from a company of this very regiment. The wild joy of the gallant 4th, at this unlooked-for good fortune, was beyond all control. Cheers as if another victory had been won burst forth again and again, and were reiterated by the whole command; while many could scarcely be restrained from embracing the guns, for which they had so long mourned. As though to add to the hilarity of the occasion, General Scott arrived soon after, and relaxing from his accustomed dignity, joined heartily in the shouts of the soldiers.

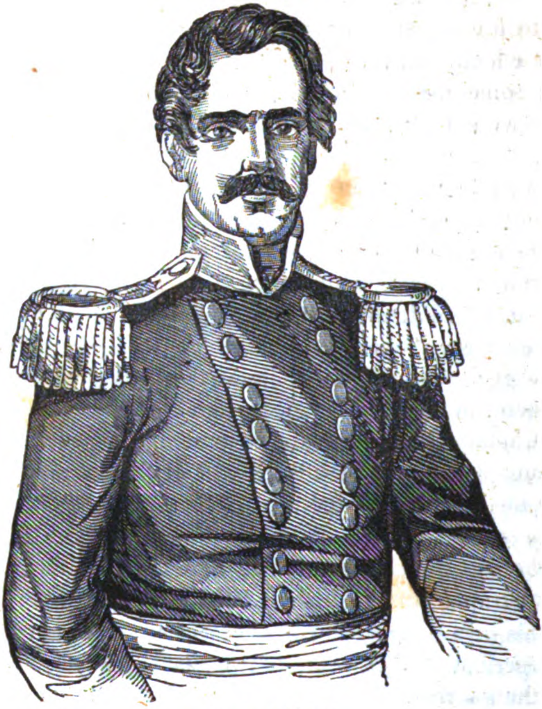


THE promptitude of General Shields in cutting off the enemy's retreat, which he accomplished by a fine stratagem, contributed in no little degree to the complete success of Smith's plan. The assault took place "not more than half a mile," "says the latter officer, " off the garden and house occupied by a part of General Shields's brigade, placed there to intercept the enemy. This skilful and gallant officer, when we marched, had spread his men over the line we had occupied, and directed them to make fires towards daylight, as though preparing their breakfast. The enemy in front had, during the night, placed batteries along their line, and in the morning moved detachments forward to take in flank the attack he saw we were meditating the night before, which he was preparing to meet, supposing, from the indications he found, that we were still in force in the village. When, after daylight, he saw a column moving on Contreras, (the intrenched camp,) and already prepared to turn it, he must have supposed we had been strongly reinforced; for his movements to and fro indicated great perplexity. His doubts were soon resolved, however, by the loss of Contreras, (the camp,) and he immediately commenced a hasty retreat along the top of the hill, inclining towards the San Angel road. Shields's force (five or six hundred men) having, under his skilful direction, thus disposed of one enemy, he turned to the other, who, in their flight, found themselves intercepted at the garden, and, under the sure fire of the South Carolina regiment, broke away over the opposite fields, and taking shelter in the ditches and ravines, escaped, many of them, to the rocks. Two squadrons of cavalry, either by chance or a wise design, in a narrow part of the road between the wall and dike, laid down their arms, and so choked the way that pursuit was interrupted for upwards of twenty minutes; which sufficed (we having no cavalry) for the safety of many of the fugitives. A large body escaped upwards towards the mountains."

This gallant conduct of General Shields was not unattended with danger to his own command. In speaking of the event of the battle, he thus describes his own operations, commencing with the time when, on the afternoon of the 19th, he marched to support General Smith.

"Directing my march upon the village near Contreras, the troops had to pass over ground covered with rocks and crags, and filled with chasms, which rendered the road almost impassable. A deep rugged ravine, along the bed of which rolled a rapid stream, was passed, after dark, with great difficulty and exertion; and to rest the wearied troops after crossing, I directed them to lie upon their arms until midnight. While occupying this position, two strong pickets, thrown out by my orders, discovered, fired upon, and drove back a body of Mexican infantry moving through the fields in a direction from their position towards the city. I have since learned that an attempt had in like manner been made by the enemy to pass the position on the main road occupied by the 1st regiment of artillery, and with a like want of success. About midnight I again resumed the march, and joined Brigadier-General Smith in the village already referred to.

"General Smith, previous to my arrival, had made the most judicious arrangement for turning and surprising the Mexican position about daybreak, and with which I could not wish to interfere. This cast upon my command the necessity of holding the position to be



General Shields.

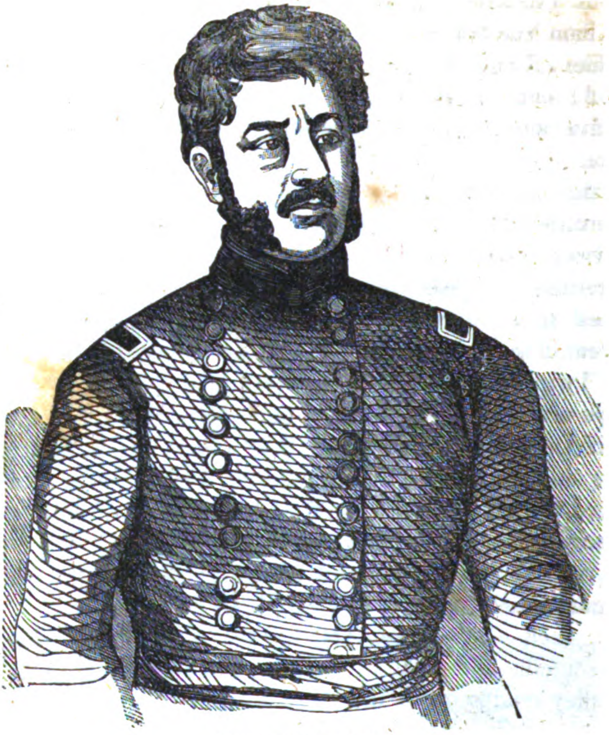
evacuated by General Smith, and which was threatened by the enemy's artillery and infantry on the right, and a large force of his cavalry on the left. About daybreak the enemy opened a brisk fire of grape and round shot upon the church and village in which my brigade was posted, as also upon a part of our own troops displayed to divert him on his right and front—evidently unaware of the movement in progress to turn his position by the left and rear. This continued until Colonel Riley's brigade opened its fire from the rear, which was delivered with such terrible effect, that the whole Mexican force was thrown into the utmost consternation.

"At this juncture, I ordered the two regiments of my command to throw themselves on the main road, by which the enemy must retire, to intercept and cut off his retreat; and, although officers and men had suffered severely during the march of the night, and from exposure without shelter or cover to the incessant rain until daybreak, this movement was executed in good order, and with rapidity. The Palmetto regiment, crossing a deep ravine, deployed on both sides of the road, and opened a most destructive fire upon the mingled masses of infantry and cavalry; and the New York regiment, brought into line lower down, and on the roadside, delivered its fire with a like effect. At this point many of the enemy were killed and wounded; some three hundred and sixty-five captured, of which twenty-five were officers, and amongst the latter was General Nicolas Mendoza.

"In the mean while the enemy's cavalry, about three thousand strong, which had been threatening our position during the morning, moved down towards us in good order, and as if to attack. I immediately recalled the infantry, to place them in position to meet the threatened movement; but soon the cavalry changed its direction and retreated towards the capital. I now received an order from General Twiggs to advance by the main road towards Mexico; and having posted Captain Marshall's company of South Carolina volunteers and Captain Taylor's New York volunteers, in charge of the prisoners and wounded, I moved off with the remainder of my force, and joined the positions of the 2d and 3d divisions, already *en route* on the main road. On this march we were joined by the general-in-chief, who assumed command of the whole, and the march continued uninterrupted until we arrived before Churubusco.

THE reports of Mexican officers captured in this battle, left no doubt that there were in and about Contreras, prior to the attack, seven thousand regular troops, under the command of General Valencia, and twelve thousand in front of Encelda, (the neighbouring hamlet,) forming a reserve, under Santa Anna. Their loss was seven hundred killed, a large number wounded, and fifteen hundred prisoners, including several generals. The Americans captured twenty-two pieces of brass ordnance—including four Spanish sixteen-pounders, four eight-inch howitzers, two five and a half inch howitzers, six six-pounders, and six smaller pieces—together with seven hundred pack mules, a large number of horses, and immense quantities of shells, ammunition, and small arms. The latter were destroyed."

A narrative of this great battle, in which three thousand men, without guns or cavalry, drove twice their number from a fortress considered impregnable, provided with every requisite of defensive warfare, and seconded by a reserve of ten thousand troops, would be



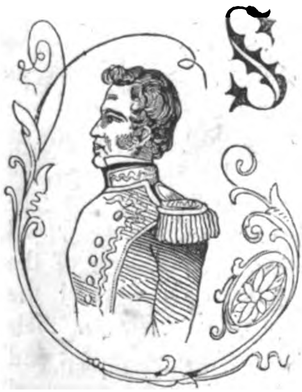
General Cadwalader.

incomplete if destitute of a meed of praise to both officers and men of the assailants. Such tribute is afforded by the one most capable of awarding it—General Smith himself. "The troops," says his report of the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, "in the actions in the pedregal, distinguished themselves far beyond my capacity to do them justice. The difficulties they overcame, supposed by the enemy to be insuperable, the hardships they endured, and the fatigue they suffered, contrasted with the manner in which they did their work, raises their character as soldiers highly towards perfection.

"Brigadier-General Cadwalader (in the morning) brought his corps up from his intricate bivouac in good order, formed the head of his column to support Riley's, and led it forward in the most gallant style under the fire directed at the latter. The 1st brigade was conducted by Major Dimick, who charged in line with it on the enemy's left, driving before him the force formed there outside of the works, and putting to rout a far superior force, displaying the skill of the commander as well as the bravery of the soldier. But the opportunity afforded by his position to Colonel Riley was seized by that gallant veteran with all the skill and energy for which he is distinguished. The charge of his noble brigade down the slope, in full view of friend and foe, unchecked even for a moment, until he had planted all his colours upon their farthest works, was a spectacle that animated the army to the boldest deeds.

"Majors Gardner and Brown, 4th artillery, at the head of their regiment, setting an example by their own courage, carried the part of the work before them; and Captain Drum, of that corps, had the good fortune to recover the trophies of Buena Vista. Colonel Plympton and Major Bainbridge, with the 7th infantry, as that veteran regiment deserves to be led, and Captain Morris, in command of the 2d infantry, brought it up to share equally with the others in the honours of the successful assault. Captain Alexander's good conduct brought his regiment up most effectively. Major Loring, detached to cover Colonel Riley's left, showed not only a perfect knowledge of the value of his arm, but the courage and activity necessary to make it effective. Lieutenant G. W. Smith, in command of the engineer company, and Lieutenant McClellan, his subaltern, distinguished themselves throughout the whole of the three actions. Nothing seemed to them too bold to be undertaken, or too difficult to be executed; and their services as engineers were as valuable as those they rendered in battle at the head of their gallant men. Lieutenant Foster, being detached from his company during the action at Contreras, did not fall under my notice; but in the actions of the 19th, and at Churubusco, he was equally conspicuous for his gallantry. In adverting to the conduct of the staff, I wish to record particularly my admiration of the conduct of Captain Lee, of the engineers. His reconnoissances, though pushed far beyond the bounds of prudence, were conducted with so much skill, that their fruits were of the utmost value—the soundness of his judgment and personal daring being equally conspicuous. Lieutenants Beauregard and Tower, of the same corps, rendered me the most important services in examining the ground, and displayed throughout the greatest personal gallantry. To the latter I am indebted for the knowledge of the route by which it was practicable to turn the enemy's works. The accident which separated the different parts of the division on the evening of the 19th, left its acting assistant adjutant-general, Lieutenant W. T. H. Brooks, with Colonel Riley's brigade, and on its joining me he offered his services on my staff. I owe him my thanks for the very efficient aid he rendered me, and for his indefatigable energy and readiness to encounter any danger or difficulty; his personal courage and coolness were brilliantly displayed in the course of the day. The events of Fort Brown, Monterey, Vera Cruz, and Cerro Gordo had already afforded to my aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Earl Van Dorn, opportunities of calling forth the commendations of his commanding officers. He has not let pass the present one; but though his gallantry was again shown in a personal conflict with the enemy, it is far from being the highest quality of a soldier that he possesses." Many other officers, of inferior grade, are mentioned by the general in terms of the highest commendation.

The loss of the army within Contreras was a severe blow to the Mexicans. Not only was their numerical force diminished by nearly one-third, but the greater part of their best military stores were lost, besides some of their ablest officers. The moral effect was tremendous. Although their actual loss in killed, wounded, and taken, was about three thousand, yet of the remainder not more than fifteen hundred joined Santa Anna, and fell back on Churubusco. The partial success of the 19th had inflated the pride of the garrison, and confirmed them in their former belief, that the works were impregnable; and the transition from this fond illusion to the unexpected realities of the 20th, was overwhelming.

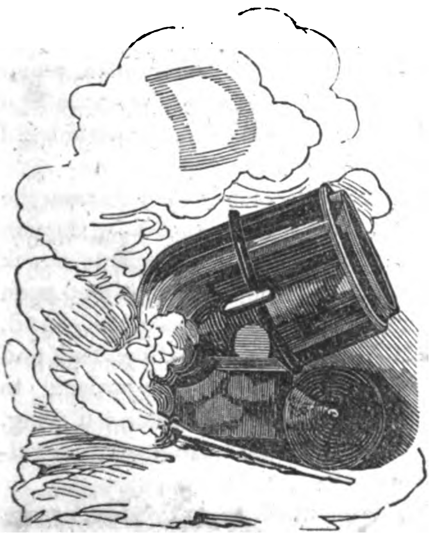


SANTA ANNA, in his official report of the action, imputes the whole blame to the commandant, General Valencia, whom he had ordered to evacuate Contreras, on perceiving that the American army had safely eluded El Penon and Mexicalzingo. This, Valencia neglected to do, relying on the strength of his position, and the known superiority of his garrison in point of numbers. But for this disobedience of orders, the difficulties of the Americans would have been seriously augmented. Even after so severe a blow, dispiriting as it was to the remainder of Santa Anna's army, the fortress of Churubusco was defended most obstinately; and the addition of seven thousand troops, led by Santa Anna, with twenty pieces of cannon, and the immense stores of Contreras, previous to the occurrence of an enervating defeat, would have thrown a degree of energy into the defence of the first position which would have required more than the exertions of Smith's and Shields's commands to carry it. "Had Valencia," says an eye-witness, "obeyed the order of Santa Anna, sent to him on the 18th August, and fallen back to Coyoacan or Churubusco, with his seven thousand veteran troops, twenty-two large cannon, and his vast stores of ammunition, it would have so strengthened Santa Anna, that we doubt if General Scott could ever have carried this latter position. As it was, our army encountered a fierce and destructive opposition, which cost us a thousand killed and wounded. Our army, too, but for the victory of Contreras, would have exhausted its supply of ammunition, before it could have made an impression on the enemy's strong position at Churubusco. But the capture of Contreras supplied the whole army with abundant stores of ammunition, and doubled the strength of our artillery.

"The result proved the sagacity of Santa Anna; for had Valencia obeyed the order to evacuate his position, we doubt if our army would now be occupying it.

"The victory of Contreras opened to our army the road to the capital. It is emphatically the great battle of the war. Had it been a defeat, disgrace and ruin, or utter annihilation would have been the fate of our army."

The language of this extract is, perhaps, in a few places, rather strong; since there can be little doubt that even in the event of a repulse before Churubusco, the genius of General Scott would have surmounted every difficulty, aud cut his way into the capital. It shows, however, the light in which the victory of Contreras was regarded by the army, and as the writer justly observes, proves the sagacity of Santa Anna.



DURING the assault upon Contreras, the divisions of Worth and Quitman were marching rapidly to Smith's assistance. But before their advance brigades had appeared in sight, the battle was over, and General Scott, arriving soon after, ordered them both to their former positions. Worth was to attack the front of San Antonio with his whole force as soon as approached in the rear by Pillow's and Twiggs's divisions—moving from Contreras through San Angel and Cayoacan. By carrying San Angel, a shorter and better road to the capital, for the siege trains, would be opened.

In order to understand the movements of the different divisions subsequent to the fall of Contreras, it will be necessary to give the sketch of them drawn by General Scott, and afterwards fill it up by detailed description. "The two advanced divisions," says the general-in-chief, "and Shields's brigade, marched from Contreras under the immediate command of Major-General Pillow, who was now joined by the gallant Brigadier-General Pierce, of his division, personally thrown out of activity late the evening before, by a severe hurt received from the fall of his horse.

"After giving necessary orders on the field, in the midst of prisoners and trophies, and sending instructions to Harney's brigade of cavalry, left at San Augustin, to join me, I personally followed Pillow's command.

"Arriving at Coyoacan, two miles by a cross road, from the rear of San Antonio, I first detached Captain Lee, engineer, with Captain Kearny's troop, first dragoons, supported by the rifle regiment, under Major Loring, to reconnoiter that strong point; and next despatched Major-General Pillow, with one of his brigades, (Cadwalader's,) to make the attack upon it, in concert with Major General Worth, on the opposite side.

"At the same time, by another road to the left, Lieutenant Stevens, of the engineers, supported by Lieutenant G. W. Smith's company of sappers and miners, of the same corps, was sent to reconnoiter the strongly fortified church or convent of San Pablo, in the hamlet of Churubusco—one mile off. Twiggs, with one of his brigades, (Smith's—less the rifles,) and Captain Taylor's field battery, were ordered to follow and to attack the convent. Major Smith, senior engineer, was despatched to concert with Twiggs the mode and means of attack, and Twiggs's other brigade, (Riley's,) I soon ordered up to support him.

"Next (but all in ten minutes) I sent Pierce, (just able to keep the saddle,) with his brigade, (Pillow's division,) conducted by Captain Lee, engineer, by a third road, a little farther to our left, to attack the enemy's right and rear, in order to favour the movement upon the convent, and cut off the retreat towards the capital. And, finally, Shields, senior brigadier to Pierce, with the New York and South Carolina volunteers, (Quitman's division,) was ordered to follow Pierce closely, and to take the command of our left wing. All these movements were made with the utmost alacrity by our gallant troops and commanders.

"Finding myself at Coyoacan, from which so many roads conveniently branched, without escort or reserve, I had to advance, for safety, close upon Twiggs's rear. The battle now raged from the right to the left of our whole line.

"Learning, on the return of Captain Lee, that Shields, in the rear of Churubusco, was hard pressed, and in danger of being outflanked, if not overwhelmed, by greatly superior numbers, I immediately sent, under Major Sumner, 2d dragoons, the rifles (Twiggs's reserve) and Captain Sibley's troop, 2d dragoons, then at hand, to support our left, guided by the same engineer.

"About an hour earlier, Worth had, by skilful and daring movements upon the front and right, turned and forced San Antonio—its garrison, no doubt, much shaken by our decisive victory at Contreras.

"His second brigade, (Colonel Clarke's,) conducted by Captain Mason, engineer, assisted by Lieutenant Hardcastle, topographical engineer, turned the right, and by a wide sweep came out upon the high road to the capital. At this point the heavy garrison, (three thousand men,) in retreat, was, by Clarke, cut in the centre; one portion, the rear, driven upon Dolores, off to the right; and the other upon Churubusco, in the direct line of our operations. The 1st brigade, (Colonel Garland's,) same division, consisting of the 2d artillery, under Major Galt, the 3d artillery, under Lieutenant-Colonel Belton, and the 4th infantry, commanded by Major F. Lee, with Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan's field-battery, (temporarily,) followed in pursuit through the town, taking one general prisoner, the abandoned guns, (five pieces,) much ammunition, and other public property.

"The forcing of San Antonio was the *second* brilliant event of the day.

"Worth's division being soon reunited in hot pursuit, he was joined by Major-General Pillow, who, marching from Coyoacan and discovering that San Antonio had been carried, immediately turned to the left, according to my instructions, and, though much impeded by ditches and swamps, hastened to the attack of Churubusco.

"The hamlet or scattered houses bearing this name presented, besides the fortified convent, a strong field-work (*tete de pont*) with regular bastions and curtains, at the head of a bridge over which the road passes, from San Antonio to the capital.

"The whole remaining forces of Mexico—some twenty-seven thousand men—cavalry, artillery, and infantry, collected from every quarter—were now in, on the flanks or within supporting distance of those works, and seemed resolved to make a last and desperate stand; for if beaten here, the feebler defences at the gates of the city—four miles off—could not, as was well known to both parties, delay the victors an hour. The capital of an ancient empire, now of a great republic; or an early peace, the assailants were resolved to win. Not an American, and we were less than a third of the enemy's numbers—had a doubt as to the result

"The fortified church or convent, hotly pressed by Twiggs, had already held out about an hour, when Worth and Pillow—the latter having with him Cadwalader's brigade—began to manœuver closely upon the *tete de pont*, with the convent at half gun-shot to their left. Garland's brigade, (Worth's division,) to which had been added the light battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, continued to advance in front and under the fire of a long line of infantry, off on the left of the bridge; and Clarke, of the same division, directed his brigade along the road, or close by its side. Two of Pillow's and Cadwalader's regiments, the 11th and 14th, supported and participated in this direct movement: the other (the voltigeurs) was left in reserve. Most of these corps—particularly Clarke's brigade—advancing perpendicularly, were made to suffer much by the fire of the *tete de pont*, and they would have suffered greatly more by flank attacks from the convent, but for the pressure of Twiggs on the other side of that work.

"This well-combined and daring movement at length reached the principal point of attack, and the formidable *tete de pont* was at once assaulted and carried by the bayonet. Its deep wet ditch was first gallantly crossed by the 8th and 5th infantry, commanded, respectively, by Major Waite and Lieutenant-Colonel Scott—followed closely by the 6th infantry, (same brigade,) which had been so much exposed on the road—the 11th regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, and the 14th commanded by Colonel Trousdale, both of Cadwalader's brigade, Pillow's division. About the same time, the enemy in front of Garland, after a hot conflict of an hour and a half, gave way, in a retreat towards the capital.

"The immedate results of this *third* signal triumph of the day were, three field-pieces, one hundred and ninety-two prisoners, much ammunition, and two colours taken at the *tete de pont*.

"Lieutenant J. F. Irons, 1st artillery, aid-de-camp to Brigadier-General Cadwalader, a young officer of great merit, and conspicuous in battle on several previous occasions, received, in front of the work, a mortal wound. (Since dead.) As the concurrent attack upon the convent favoured, physically and morally, the assault upon the *tete de pont*, so, reciprocally, no doubt, the fall of the latter contributed to the capture of the former. The two works were only some four hundred and fifty yards apart; and as soon as we were in possession of the *tete de pont*, a captured four-pounder was turned and fired—first by Captain Larkin Smith, and next by Lieutenant Snelling, both of the 8th infantry—several times upon the convent. In the same brief interval, Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan (also of Worth's division) gallantly brought two of his guns to bear, at a short range, from the San Antonio road, upon the principal face of the work, and on the tower of the church, which in the obstinate contest, had been often refilled with some of the best sharp-shooters of the enemy.

"Finally, twenty minutes after the *tete de pont* had been carried by Worth and Pillow, and at the end of a desperate conflict of two hours and a half, the church or convent—the citadel of the strong line of defence along the rivulet of Churubusco—yielded to Twiggs's division, and threw out on all sides signals of surrender. The white flags, however, were not exhibited until the moment when the 3d infantry, under Captain Alexander, had cleared the way by fire and bayonet, and had entered the work. Captain J. M. Smith and Lieutenant O. L. Shepherd, both of that regiment, with their companies, had the glory of leading the assault. The former received the surrender, and Captain Alexander instantly hung out from the balcony the colours of the gallant 3d. Major Dimick, with a part of the 1st artillery, serving as infantry, entered nearly abreast with the leading troops.

"Captain Taylor's field-battery, attached to Twiggs's division, opened its effective fire at an early moment, upon the outworks of the convent and the tower of its church. Exposed to the severest fire of the enemy, the captain, his officers and men, won universal admiration; but at length much disabled, in men and horses, the battery was, by superior orders, withdrawn from the action, thirty minutes before the surrender of the convent.

"Those corps, excepting Taylor's battery, belonged to the brigade of Brigadier-General Smith, who closely directed the whole attack in front, with his habitual coolness and ability; while Riley's brigade—the 2d and 7th infantry, under Captain T. Morris and Lieutenant-Colonel Plympton, respectively—vigorously engaged the right of the work and part of its rear. At the moment the rifles, belonging to Smith's, were detached in support of Brigadier-General Shields's on our extreme left; and the 4th artillery, acting as infantry, under Major Gardner, belonging to Riley's brigade, had been left in charge of the camp, trophies, &c., at Contreras. Twiggs's division, at Churubusco, had thus been deprived of the services of two of its most gallant and effective regiments.

"The immediate results of this victory were:—the capture of seven field-pieces, some ammunition, one colour, three generals, and one thousand two hundred and sixty-one prisoners, including other officers.

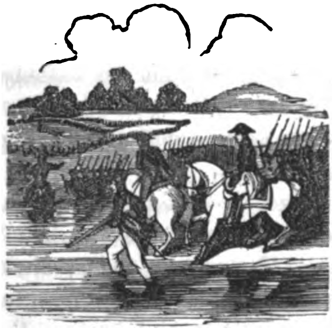
"Captains E. A. Capron and M. J. Burke, and Lieutenant S. Hoffman, all of the 1st artillery, and Captain J. W. Anderson and

Lieutenant Thomas Easley, both of the 2d infantry—five officers of great merit—fell gallantly before this work.

"The capture of the enemy's citadel was the *fourth* great achievement of our arms in the same day.

"It has been stated that, some two hours and a half before, Pierce's followed closely by the volunteer brigade—both under the command of Brigadier-General Shields—had been detached to our left to turn the enemy's works;—to prevent the escape of the garrisons and to oppose the extension of the enemy's numerous corps, from the rear, upon and around our left.

"Considering the inferior numbers of the two brigades, the objects of the movement were difficult to accomplish. Hence the reinforcement (the rifles, &c.) sent forward a little later.



IN a winding march of a mile around to the right, this temporary division found itself on the edge of an open wet meadow, near the road from San Antonio to the capital, and in the presence of some four thousand of the enemy's infantry, a little in rear of Churubusco, on that road. Establishing the right at a strong building, Shields extended his left, parallel to the road, to outflank the enemy towards the capital. But the enemy extending his right, supported by three thousand cavalry, more rapidly, (being favoured by better ground,) in the same direction, Shields concentrated the division about a hamlet, and determined to attack in front. The battle was long, hot, and varied; but ultimately, success crowned the zeal and gallantry of our troops, ably directed by their distinguished commander, Brigadier-General Shields. The 9th, 12th, and 15th regiments, under Colonel Ransom, Captain Wood, and Colonel Morgan, respectively, of Pierce's brigade, (Pillow's division,) and the New York and South Carolina volunteers, under Colonels Burnett and Butler, respectively, of Shields's own brigade, (Quitman's division,) together with the mountain howitzer battery, now under Lieutenant Reno, of the ordnance corps, all shared in the glory of this action—our *fifth* victory in the same day.

"Brigadier-General Pierce, from the hurt of the evening before—under pain and exhaustion—fainted in the action. Several other changes in command occurred on this field. Thus Colonel Morgan being severely wounded, the command of the 15th infantry devolved on

Lieutenant-Colonel Howard; Colonel Burnett receiving a like wound, the command of the New York volunteers fell to Lieutenant-Colonel Baxter; and, on the fall of the lamented Colonel P. M. Butler—earlier badly wounded, but continuing to lead nobly in the hottest part of the battle—the command of the South Carolina volunteers devolved—first on Lieutenant-Colonel Dickinson, who being severely wounded, (as before in the seige of Vera Cruz,) the regiment ultimately fell under the orders of Major Gladden.

"Lieutenants David Adams and W. R. Williams, of the same corps; Captain Augustus Quarles, and Lieutenant J. B. Goodman, of the 15th, and Lieutenant E. Chandler, New York volunteers—all gallant officers, nobly fell in the same action.

"Shields took three hundred and eighty prisoners, including officers; and it cannot be doubted that the rage of the conflict between him and the enemy, just in the rear of the *tete de pont* and the convent, had some influence on the surrender of those formidable defences.

"As soon as the *tete de pont* was carried, the greater part of Worth's and Pillow's forces passed that bridge in rapid pursuit of the flying enemy. These distinguished generals, coming up with Brigadier-General Shields, now also victorious, the three continued to press upon the fugitives to within a mile and a half of the capital. Here, Colonel Harney, with a small part of his brigade of cavalry, rapidly passed to the front, and charged the enemy up to the nearest gate.

"The cavalry charge was headed by Captain Kearny, of the 1st dragoons, having a squadron, with his own troop, that of Captain McReynolds, of the 3d—making the usual escort to general head-quarters; but, being early in the day attached for general service, was now under Colonel Harney's orders. The gallant captain not hearing the *recall* that had been sounded, dashed up to the San Antonio gate, sabreing, in his way, all who resisted. Of the seven officers of the squadron, Kearny lost his left arm; McReynolds and Lieutenant Lorimer Graham were both severely wounded, and Lieutenant R. S. Ewell, who succeeded to the command of the escort, had two horses killed under him. Major F. D. Mills, of the 15th infantry, a volunteer in this charge, was killed at the gate.

"So terminated the series of events which I have but feebly presented. My thanks were freely poured out on the different fields—to the abilities and science of generals and other officers—to the gallantry and prowess of all—the rank and file included. But a reward infinitely higher—the applause of a grateful country and government—will, I cannot doubt, be accorded, in due time, to so much merit, of every sort, displayed by this glorious army, which has now overcome all difficulties—distance, climate, ground, fortifications, numbers."

IN order to have a proper appreciation of the numerous and complicated movements thus systematically sketched, it will be necessary to describe each in the order detailed, as far as it can be done without too much isolating events, which were mutually dependent in effect, and simultaneous in point of time. In a single charge, like that of Colonel Riley, or even in the concentrated efforts of an army, in open field, there is little danger of error or confusion in the description. But when an army is dissected into numerous columns, crossing and recrossing each other, over the most aggravating ground, and storming intricate chains of works, where every building is a fort, and victory is won only when the very last work is carried, even the eye witness, unless he be a military genius of the first order, is incapable of forming a purely systematic opinion of the scene before him. Notwithstanding, therefore, the utmost care on the part of the historian, our description must be somewhat faint and imperfect. The safest course then—that which has hitherto been exclusively pursued in our descriptions of battles—is to describe each important incident as nearly as possible in the order of its occurrence, basing the description entirely on the reports of the American commanders.

As early as the 18th instant, General Worth had taken position, with his division, on the causeway leading to San Antonio, within fifteen hundred yards of its fortified front. The reconnoissance of that evening, in the course of which Captain Thornton was killed, has already been mentioned. Its object was to ascertain, if possible, a route for turning the entire system of defense by the enemy's right. This was satisfactorily accomplished on the following morning, and at eleven o'clock, A. M. the division commenced its movement towards the fortress. The van was conducted by Colonel Clarke, who was followed by Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, the whole under the guidance of Captain Mason and Lieutenant Hardcastle of the engineers. The troops took such a direction as to envelope the Mexican right, and at the same time be in position to cut off any attempted retreat towards the capital.

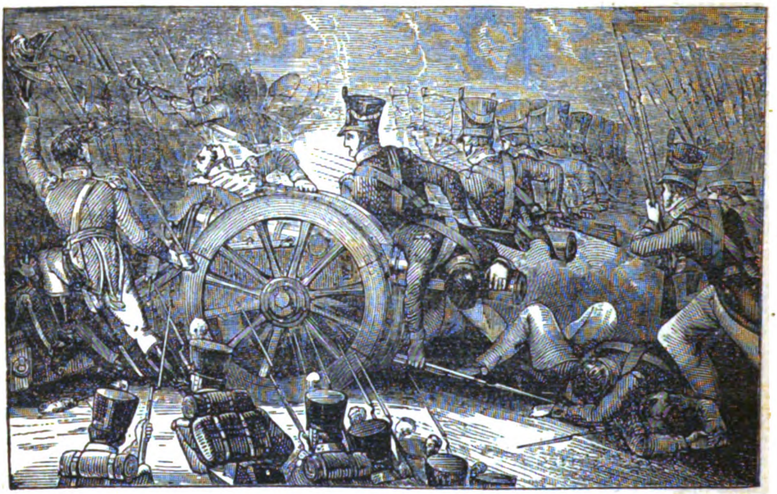
While Worth was conducting these movements in front of San Antonio, General Pillow approached its rear from Contreras. After marching as rapidly as the nature of the ground would permit, he halted at Coyoacan, in order to await the arrival of General Scott. Here it was ascertained that the enemy, on discovering the loss of Contreras, had abandoned San Antonio, lest their rear would be exposed, and fallen back upon Churubusco. Another strong position was thus surrendered to the Americans, affording them advantages which they were not slow in improving. Twiggs immediately received orders to move forward with his division, and attack the work on the enemy's right; and Pillow to assault, with Cadwalader's brigade, the *tete de pont* (a strong fort on the bridge) on the left. The troops having to pass over marshy fields and deep ditches filled with mud and water, rendered the execution of these commands very difficult. The perseverance of both officers and men finally overcame these obstacles, and the two commands safely reached the causeway, where they came in sight of General Worth, with the advance of his division, marching to attack the same work.

The operations of this gallant officer, in the field before San Antonio, together with his attack upon Churubusco and San Pablo, are thus described by himself:

"Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan's artillery (light battery) and the 1st brigade, composed of the 2d and 3d artillery and 4th infantry, commanded by Brevet Colonel Garland, was advanced to an angle in the causeway which partially masked it from the enemy's direct fire, and held in readiness for a rapid direct movement when the 2d brigade should become engaged and have attracted attention to that quarter. Subsequently, the 4th infantry was placed on the left of the causeway, and instructed to move by a flank, under guidance of Assistant Adjutant-General Mackall, between that route and the 2d brigade, either to sustain the latter, or, if opportunity offered, rush upon one of the batteries. Discovering these dispositions, and particularly the movement of the 2d brigade, and doubtless somewhat influenced by the operations going on in the direction of Contreras, the enemy sent troops to check the advance of our left, and commenced an evacuation of the works.

"After having brushed away the troops in front, Colonel Clarke's command approached a point on the high road occupied by the enemy's retreating column, and by a rapid movement, particularly of two companies of the 5th infantry, under Captains Morril and McPhail, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, guided by Captain Mason, cut this column nearly in the centre—the advanced portion of it moving upon Churubusco, (where we shortly afterwards discovered the enemy's main array of battle,) and the remainder, about two thousand in number, under General Bravo, with four pieces of artillery, retreated upon Dolores. The instant Clarke's fire opened, Garland was instructed to advance rapidly in column, and attempt a direct assault, previously detaching a company in advance, which, by drawing the enemy's fire, might discover the magnitude of his batteries in that quarter; but it appeared that the guns at that point had been hastily withdrawn in the hope of getting them away. Garland's column was soon in, unresisted, and rapidly passed through the works, and on the high road to the capital. Some six hundred yards beyond the works, the division was reunited, and, disregarding the force retreating upon Dolores, the whole moved rapidly and in good order to the higher object. Approaching Churubusco—that place being on the left, and near the road—it was discovered to be strongly occupied with troops, and protected by batteries and infantry defences. Farther in advance was discovered a regular field-work, garnished with heavy guns and crowded with troops. Between the two, a continuous line of infantry; and on the left and rear of the work, (*tete de pont*,) a dense line of infantry as far as the eye could reach. On getting within cannon-shot, and so of musketry, the enemy opened with effect upon the head of the leading battalion. Garland's brigade was now thrown promptly to the right of, and in line of columns obliquely to, the road; which order would, in its advance and deployment, strike the enemy's line at a like angle—the light battalion on its right. The 2d brigade was ordered to move also to the right, (except the 6th infantry,) and by a flank parallel to the road, while the 6th infantry was directed to advance by the high road and storm the *tete de pont* in front. The field to the right was filled with standing corn, which masked large bodies of the enemy, and from whose fire, in consequence, every command suffered greatly in the first instance. Running over these, Garland's brigade was soon engaged with their more regular lines and masses. Clarke's, as soon as it could be got in the position above described—and it came at double-quick time—became engaged in like manner.

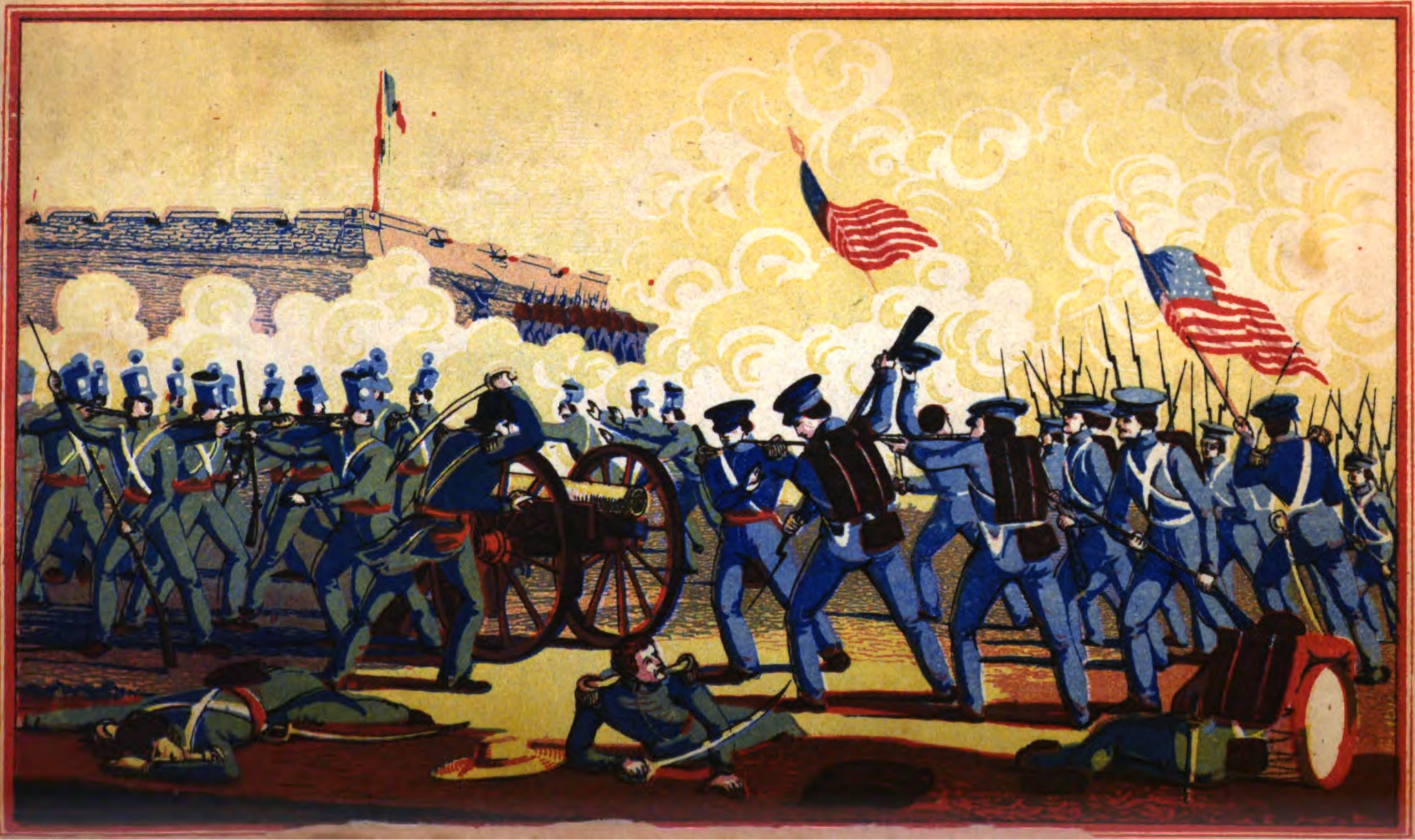
"The 6th regiment of infantry moved with a steadiness worthy of its established reputation, to assault the work in front, as directed; but being exposed to a combined fire of grape, canister, and musketry, which raked the road, it was of necessity momentarily checked. Meantime, the 8th and 5th of Clarke's brigade, more favourably situated to effect results, but under a terrible fire, dashed past the deep and wet ditch that entirely surrounded the work, carried it by the bayonet, and, as quick as thought, turned the captured cannon upon that portion of the enemy stationed in the town, and which was combating our troops approaching from the direction of Contreras, occasionally reversing their fire upon our left flank. Previous to this period, and when in the act of giving direction to the battalions, I was joined by Major-General Pillow, who came in from the left with three regiments of his division—Cadwalader's brigade—having with great difficulty made his way through the marshes; thence to the close of the day, I had the pleasure of his gallant association and assistance. Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan's battery of light artillery which had been directed to be masked, being unable to counter-batter the heavier metal in front, and the intersected character of the ground rendering it impossible to move it from the high-road, was now rapidly advanced by its gallant commander, and opened at a position some two hundred yards distant from the work around the church of San Pablo, situated in, and constituting the key of, that portion of the enemy's defences; seizing the prolongation of a principal face, in a space of five minutes, by a fire of astonishing rapidity, the enemy was driven from his guns in that quarter, and the infantry from their intrenchments; the main body taking refuge in the church and under cover of its yard walls. The fire was then turned upon the church, and after a few rounds, several white flags were thrown out by the enemy, the fire ordered to cease, and an officer despatched to accept the surrender of the place. To this period there had been no perceptible abatement of the fire from the town in the direction of our troops attacking the opposite face. Immediately thereafter, our troops in the vicinity pushed on to the point where portions of Garland's and Clarke's brigades were yet engaged in hand-to-hand conflicts with the masses of infantry on the left and rear of the captured field-work first referred to; but, under the triple influence of our musketry, the capture of the *tete de pont*, and the silencing of the fire in the town, (directed upon other divisions of our army,) the main body of the enemy was soon discovered to be in full and confused retreat. Pressing along the highway in pursuit of the enemy, the division was soon intersected by the brigade of General Shields approaching from the left, with the *remainder* of his brave command, consisting of the South Carolina and New York regiments, and also by the arrival of Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, with the small remains of his battalion of the 11th regiment of infantry. These were a portion of the main army assaulting, in the opposite direction of the town, the right and reserve of the enemy, under the immediate direction of the general-in-chief. The pursuit of the enemy by the first division, acting in concert and cordial co-operation with these forces, was continued to within one mile and a half of the gate of Mexico, (La Candelaria.) At this point, ignorant, first, of the magnitude of the defences at the garita, and, secondly, of the ulterior



The Storming of Churubusco.

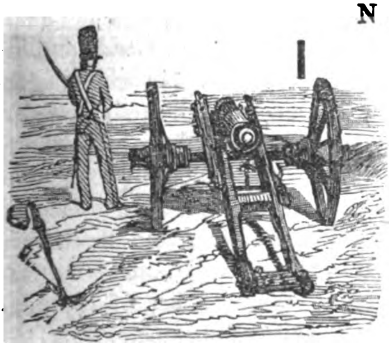
views of the general-in-chief, I ordered a halt of the united forces, after consulting with Major-General Pillow and Brigadier-General Shields. Colonel Harney, coming up at this instant with two squadrons of cavalry, was permitted to make a dash at the rear of the enemy's retiring forces. In the eager pursuit, the head of the column pressing on too closely, and disregarding or not hearing their commander's recall, came under the fire of the battery, and suffered severely. The ground on which the troops operated, off the highroad, is remarkably intersected; loose soil, growing grain, and, at brief intervals, deep ditches for the purpose of drainage and irrigation. These ditches vary from six to eight feet in depth, about the same in width, with from three to four feet of water—the reverse banks lined with the enemy's light troops."

It should be remembered that nearly all these operations were conducted at different points of the field, during the same time. The whole battle-ground, from the capture of Contreras until the final retreat of the enemy, presented one of the most exciting spectacles ever witnessed on the American continent. More than forty thousand troops were engaged in close conflict, on foot and on horseback, sometimes in the open field, and at other times behind breastworks of the strongest construction. While Pillow approached the fortress on one side, Worth's troops were sweeping along the causeway on the other; while in the intermediate spaces, Generals Twiggs, Shields, and their companions were hurrying along masses of reinforcements. Sometimes the shouts of soldiers and rumbling of artillery could be



heard ringing clearly across the plains; and then in a few moments every other sound would be swallowed up in the loud roaring of opposing batteries. Through storms of iron hail, which scattered death on all sides, the Americans rushed, while conducting their charges, upon the cathedral and neighbouring buildings of Churubusco. The final assault was conducted in the spirit of fearless impetuosity characteristic of the American soldier—brilliant to behold, but terrible to the enemy.

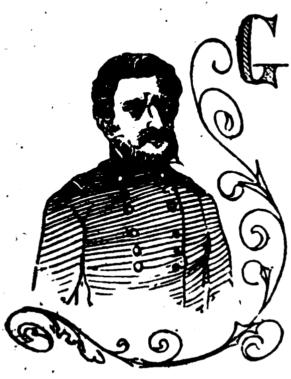
Its effect upon the Mexicans was decisive. Abandoning every thing, they fled in distressing confusion towards the city, treading each other down in their hurry and terror. And when among their terrified shrieking masses, broke like an avalanche, the dragoons of Harney, the uproar and slaughter were terrific. Some were ridden down, others killed by a stroke of the sabre, numbers rolled down amid the rugged passes, and others were crushed into the earth by their companions. Harney's report conveys a just though faint idea of the scene:—"Perceiving that the enemy were retreating in disorder on one of the main causeways leading to the city of Mexico, I collected all the cavalry within my reach, consisting of parts of Captain Ker's company 2d dragoons, Captain Kearny's company 1st dragoons, and Captains McReynolds and Duperu's companies of the 3d dragoons, and pursued them vigorously until we were halted by the discharge of the batteries at their gate. Many of the enemy were overtaken in the pursuit and cut down by our sabres. I cannot speak in terms too complimentary of the manner in which this charge was executed. My only difficulty was in restraining the impetuosity of my men and officers, who seemed to vie with each other, who should be foremost in the pursuit. Captain Kearny gallantly led his squadron into the very intrenchments of the enemy, and had the misfortune to lose an arm from a grape-shot fired from a gun at one of the main gates of the capital."



IN taking a view of this day's operations the mind seems scarcely able to grasp the magnitude and importance of the American victories. Any one of the great events of August 20th, performed by itself, would have struck the civilized world as one of the greatest feats of modern warfare, worthy of being recorded on the same historic page with those of Cortes or Napoleon. But the whole taken together, stagger and perplex by their very magnitude, like the distances spoken of by astronomers, which although heard of with indifference would, if separated into appreciable fractions, overwhelm the imagination. Defences which had cost the greatest chief of Mexico incessant labour, which had drawn forth the utmost skill and exertion of the enemy, and were regarded as impregnable, were in a few hours demolished or captured. In one day the strength of Mexico was broken. A loss so utter was regarded by its very sufferers as a mere dream, something which could not be. Santa Anna was saved from despair, only because the suddenness of the blow deprived him of an opportunity to feel the actual extent of his loss. It was virtually the conquest of the capital, and had the Mexicans been wise, or even possessed common sense, the war would then have terminated. There was reason for the triumphant language of the intrepid general-in-chief, while summing up the results of victory:— "It (the army) has, in a single day, in many battles as often defeated thirty-two thousand men; made about three thousand prisoners, including eight generals, (two of them ex-presidents,) and two hundred and five other officers; killed or wounded four thousand of all ranks, besides entire corps dispersed and dissolved; captured thirty-seven pieces of ordnance—more than trebling our siege train and field-batteries—with a large number of small arms, a full supply of ammunition of every kind. These great results have overwhelmed the enemy."

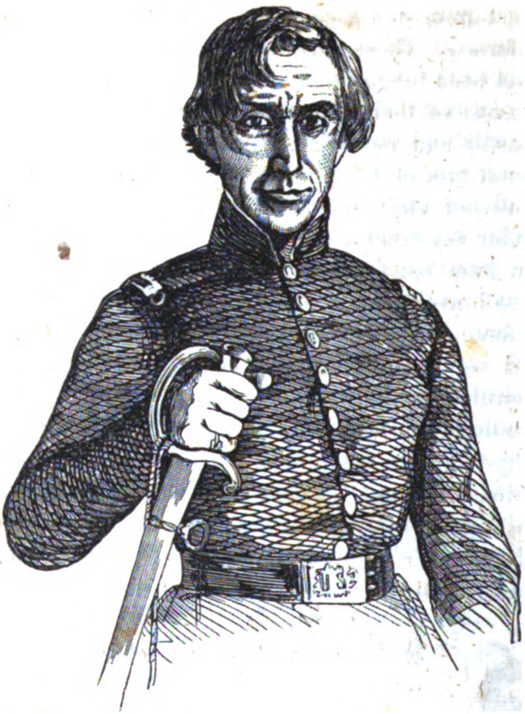
Similar language is used by all the superior officers, in describing their respective operations, and the gallantry of their troops. "When I recur to the nature of the ground, and the fact that the divison (two thousand six hundred strong of all arms) was engaged from two to two and a half hours in a hand to hand conflict with from seven to nine thousand of the enemy, having the advantage of position, and occupying regular works—which our engineers will say were most skilfully constructed—the mind is filled with wonder, and the heart with gratitude to the brave officers and soldiers whose steady and indomitable valour has, under such circumstances, aided in achieving results so honourable to our country—results not accomplished, however, without the sacrifice of many valuable lives. The little professional skill the commander may have possessed was intensely exerted to spare the men; and yet, with the utmost care, we have to mourn the loss, in killed and wounded, of thirteen officers and three hundred and thirty-six rank and file. Our country will lament the fate and honour the memory of these brave men. A list of captured ordnance has already been handed in, as also of prisoners, from generals down to privates. Of prisoners, we paused to make but few; although receiving the surrender of many, to disarm and pass them was deemed sufficient. Among them, however, are secured twenty-seven deserters from our own army, arrayed in the most tawdry Mexican uniforms. These wretches served the guns—the use of which they had been taught in our own service—and with fatal effect, upon the persons of their former comrades! And now, in closing this report, hastily and inconveniently prepared, comes the pleasing and yet difficult task of bringing more particularly to the notice of the general-in-chief and government, the behaviour of the officers and men under my command. Every officer of every grade, and every soldier, from chief of brigade, through rank and file, to the humblest, have bravely and nobly done their duty; and the delicacy is felt in full force of distinguishing even by a separation of one from the other, and yet those in whose path Fortune threw her special favours are entitled to the benefit."

Besides the deserters mentioned in this extract as part of Worth's prisoners, forty-two were captured by Shields's troops, among whom was the notorious Captain O'Riley, who had deserted prior to the war, and fought with great bravery at Monterey and other places. These men were placed in close custody, in order to await their trial for desertion and treason.



GENERAL QUITMAN during the operations of the 20th, was unfortunately prevented from participating, by being placed with the 2d Pennsylvania volunteers and a detachment of United States marines, at the depot of San Augustin. Here General Scott had placed his sick and wounded, together with the supply, siege and baggage trains. "Had these been lost the army would have been almost driven to despair; and considering the enemy's very great excess of numbers, and the many approaches to the depot, it might well have become emphatically the post of honour."

In his report to the secretary of war, the general-in-chief does not omit to notice the skill and indefatigable exertions of the officers commanding divisions and brigades. His testimony is the more valuable not only on account of his acknowledged discrimination with regard to character, but also from the fact of his being an eye-witness to most of the scenes of this eventful day. In like manner these officers speak of those whom they had the credit to command. The following extract, from the report of Major-General Worth, exhibits the high military qualities of his brother officers as well as of his personal staff:



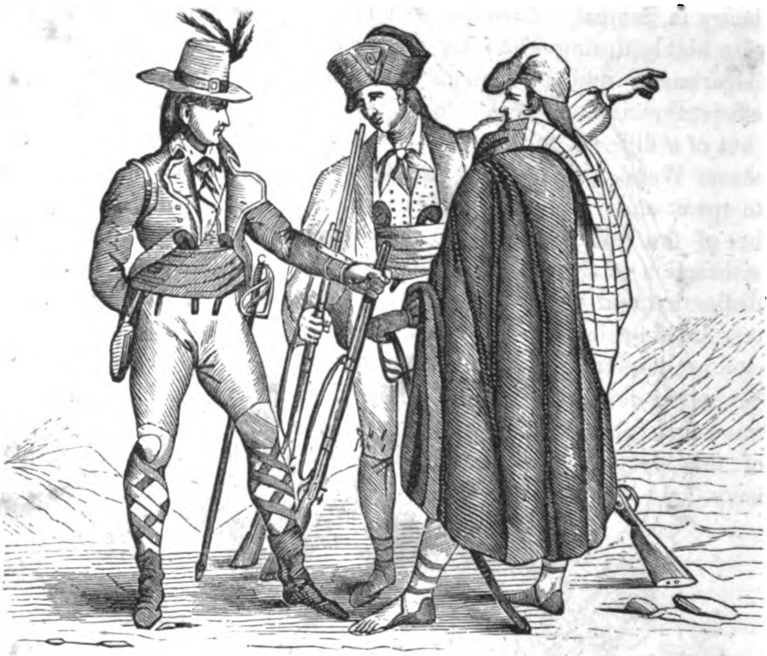
Assistant Adjutant-General McCall.

"The division commander cannot forego the opportunity presented, to acknowledge his obligations and express his admiration of the gallant bearing of Major-General Pillow, and Brigadier-Generals Shields, Cadwalader, and Pierce, with whom he had the gratification of concert and co-operation at various critical periods of the conflict. And it may now, in closing, be permitted to speak of the staff of the division, general and personal. The subordinate reports will be found to speak with one sentiment of Captain Mason, of engineers; but these are not to debar my testimony and warm acknowledgments of the intelligent and gallant services of this accomplished officer—in the estimation of all, he has won high reputation, and established unequivocal claims to higher rank. Lieutenant Hardcastle, topographical engineers, has been distinguished by zeal, intelligence, and gallantry, in his particular department, as also in combat. To Surgeon Satterlee, senior medical officer, the highest praise is due. Captain Myers, division quartermaster, has highly distinguished himself by energy and devotion in his particular department, and by gallantry in combat. Lieutenant Armstrong, division commissary, is also highly distinguished for energy and devotion in his particular department, and by gallantry in combat. Of the gallant and efficient assistance of Captain Mackall, assistant adjutant-general, (but of a different relation,) of Brevet Captain Pemberton, and Lieutenant Wood, aids-de-camp, it has been my pleasing duty heretofore to speak under similar circumstances. On this occasion, each member of the staff has fulfilled every duty of his station to the entire satisfaction of their chief, and established new claims to professional distinction and reward. To Lieutenant Semmes, of the navy, volunteer aid-de-camp, the most cordial thanks of the general of the division are tendered for his uniform gallantry and assistance; and the general-in-chief is respectfully requested to present the conduct of this accomplished and gallant officer to the special notice of the chief of this distinguished branch of the public service—our glorious navy."

E PLURIBUS UNUM

IN speaking of a different branch of the service Colonel Harney says, "The dragoons from the commencement of the march from Puebla have been engaged on the most active and laborious service. These duties have been the more arduous in consequence of the small force of cavalry compared with the other arms of service. Small parties being constantly engaged in reconnoitering and on picket-guards, the utmost vigilance and precaution have been required to prevent surprise and disaster. * * On the 20th, although I had but four companies of my brigade with me on the field, the remainder were actively employed in the performance of important and indispensable duties. Captain Hardee, while watching the enemy with his company, near San Antonio, was attacked by a band of guerrillas; but the enemy was promptly and handsomely repulsed, and a number of their horses, with arms and accoutrements, captured."

Notwithstanding the exhausted condition of the American troops, they were eager to enter the capital during the night of the 20th. It is probable that they might have done so without much additional loss. But to this General Scott would not consent, wisely restraining their enthusiasm, in order to afford them an opportunity for repose. His efforts were warmly seconded by Mr. Trist, the American



Guerrillas.

ambassador, and numerous friends of both his own and the Mexican armies. The different divisions were accordingly withdrawn to secure positions, and every preparation made for the comfort of the wounded, the repose of the troops, and for acting on the morrow as circumstances might warrant.*

The loss of the Mexicans in the battles of August has already been stated. That of their antagonists was one hundred and thirty-seven, including fourteen officers killed; sixty-two officers and eight hundred and fifteen privates wounded, and thirty-eight rank and file missing. The officers were among the most valuable in the service, including the lamented Colonel P. M. Butler, of South Carolina, killed, Colonels Burnett and Dickinson wounded, Captains Hanson and Kearny, Major Mills, and many others. The largest number

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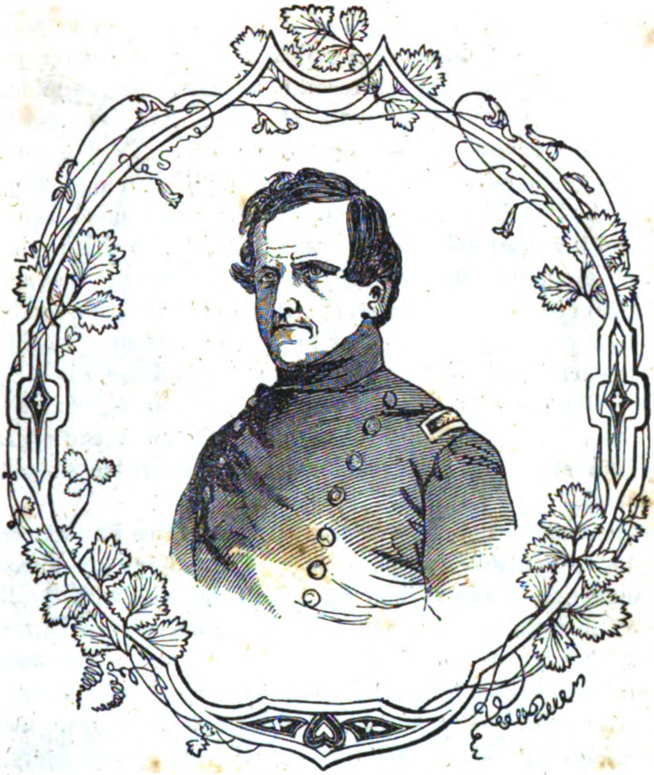
* We have stated it in the text as *probable*, that General Scott could have entered the city of Mexico, on the evening of the 20th, without much additional loss. We wish the qualifying term to be used in its utmost latitude. It requires no straining of facts or suppositions to believe, on the other hand, that the probability was a faint one, and that the cannon other than Churubusco's, might have unexpectedly glared upon the Americans, in case of a night attack. The real truth is, that the defences of the city, at that time, have never been ascertained, either by our army or nation; and when we reflect on the nature of the subsequent operations, there is ample room for the friends of humanity to thank General Scott for his timely halt in the full flush of victory.



Colonel Burnett.

actually engaged with the enemy was eight thousand five hundred; who together with the small garrison of San Augustin, and the sick, formed the entire strength of the army which stormed Contreras and Churubusco.

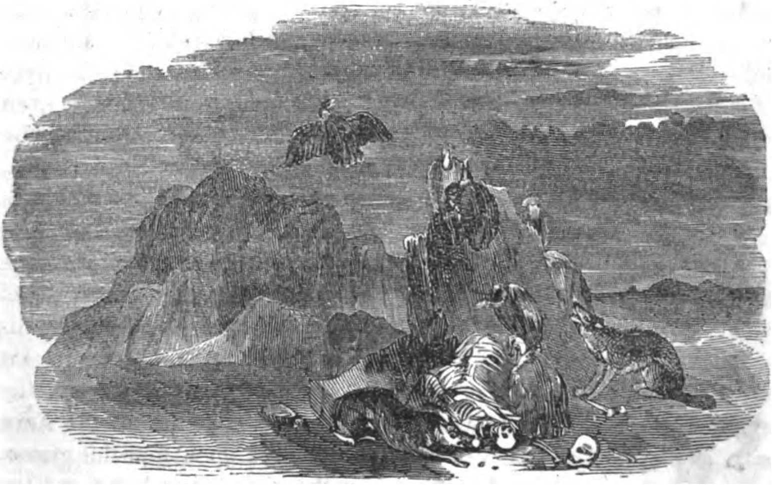
A cotemporary remarks as follows on this subject:—"The first question that arises is, could General Scott have entered Mexico on the night of the 20th? His soldiers had been watching, marching, fasting, and fighting for more than thirty-six hours; over a thousand of his small force were killed or disabled, and the heights of Chapultepec and the line of the *garitas* were still before him, capable, as was afterwards shown, of making a strong defence. How easy soever the achievement may seem to an editor in his closet, we apprehend that it was not a labour to be undertaken by a general in the field. The Mexican army which defended Churubusco, though defeated, was not destroyed; it retreated towards the third and strongest line of defence, and was, or could easily have been, rallied behind its batteries. For General Scott to have attempted to enter

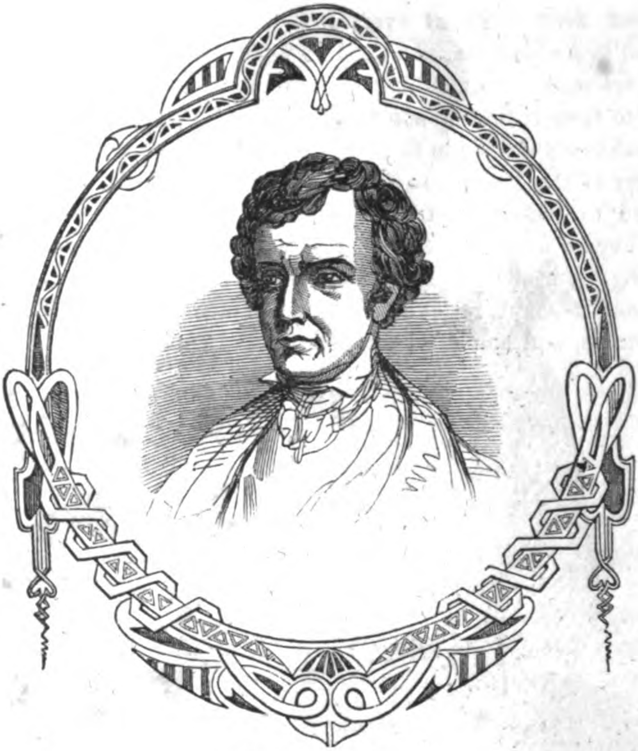
Mexico on the night of the 20th of August, it appears to us, would have been an act of desperation which nothing could have justified but the exceedingly improbable result of success. Had he undertaken it and failed, the warriors of the quill would have been the first to discover and expose the madness of the act. They would have inquired why he could not have waited until morning; why, with half famished and exhausted troops, with the wounded calling for assistance, the dead unburied, and the living scarce able to drag one leg after the other, he had marched against strong works and a densely populated city, when one night's rest would have quadrupled the efficiency of his force? And the voice of censure would have been as general as it would probably have been deserved.

"The conclusion has thus been forced upon us, that General Scott was obliged to pause for breath after the continued operations of the 19th and 20th, which terminated in the terrible slaughter of Churubusco.

"But that same evening he received a flag of truce from the enemy, asking for an armistice and proposing peace. Representations were at the same time made to him by those connected with the British embassy, that there was every probability that negotiations would terminate favourably and honourably to all parties. The American commander was placed in a position of great delicacy and responsibility. It was his ardent desire to terminate the war, spare the lives of his soldiers, and avoid the infliction of unnecessary injury, even upon the foe. He had good reason to believe that by granting the armistice all these objects would be attained; and he did grant it, making it terminable in forty-eight hours. What would have been said of him had he refused? He must, in that case, either have taken the city or failed in the attempt. If the former, we would have been precisely in the condition in which we are at present, and General Scott would have been accused of sacrificing the lives of his countrymen, and unnecessarily prolonging the war, to promote his own ambitious aims, and gratify the pernicious vanity of claiming the conqueror's rank with Cortes. Not one in fifty of those who have now discovered that all negotiation with Mexico was an idle farce, but would have been certain that, had the Mexican proposition been entertained, we should have had an honourable and permanent peace. But in the hazards of war, General Scott might have been repulsed on the morning of the 21st, and then imagination can scarcely depict the execrations which would have been poured upon his head. Whatever he might have done, it will thus be seen, he would have exposed himself to animadversion and misconstruction; to the idle comments of the unthinking, and the malicious remarks of the envious. For our own part, we are willing to believe that General Scott acted as every hero and patriot would have done, placed in his position, and burdened with his responsibilities; at any rate, we must see something stronger than has yet appeared against him, to suspect that he acted with want of judgment or want of zeal."

Sentiments similar to those of this extract were echoed from every quarter of the Union; so that the military critics who had endeavoured to depreciate the importance, and hide the magnitude of such events as those of Contreras and Churubusco, could gain no hearing from the public. The envious voice of detraction was drowned in shouts of exultation and joy, which ran through every city, town, and hamlet of our wide-spread country.



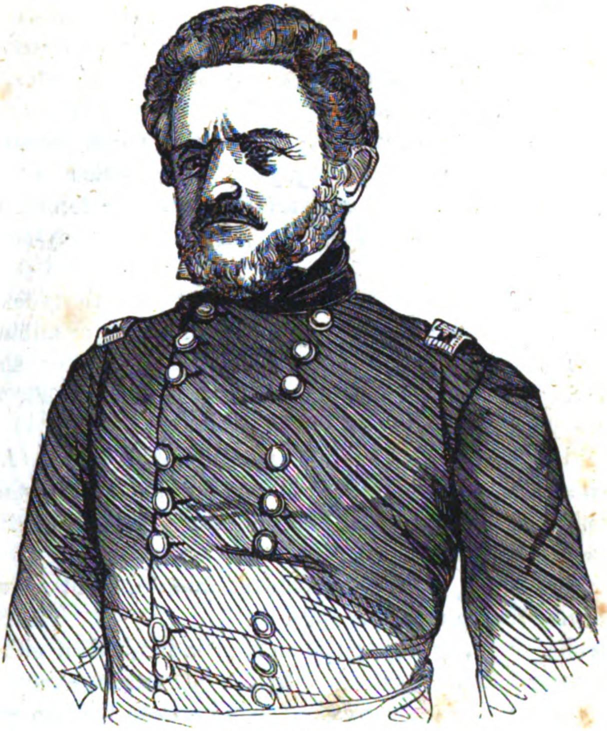


Nicholas P. Trist.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE ARMISTICE.

THE office of General Scott, as commander of the American forces in Mexico, imposed upon him the gravest duties and responsibilities, and rendered the greatest prudence necessary in every act. His reluctance to make an attempt upon the Mexican capital on the night of the 20th, besides being dictated by the humanity for which he has ever been remarkable, was, in no less a degree, the result of policy, and obedience to previous orders from government. Ever keeping in mind the repeated directions of the president to conquer a peace, he had, at each step of his pro-



General Quitman.

gress from the coast, used every effort to open negotiations for an honourable adjustment of the difficulties between the two nations. The mission of Mr. Trist was directed to the same object. This gentleman had reached Vera Cruz from the United States, in July, and after remaining there for some time, had joined the army and marched with it towards the capital. Conceiving that, after the losses of the 19th and 20th of August, the enemy would be willing to open negotiations for peace, he was earnest in his representations to the general of the propriety of affording the opportunity for so desirable an issue. Accordingly, before the following morning, offers for a temporary cessation of hostilities were interchanged between the two commanders, and commissioners appointed to negotiate the armistice. Generals Quitman, Smith, and Pierce, were named on the part of the Americans; and Ignacio de Mora y Villamil, and Benito Quijano, on that of the Mexicans. On the 22d, these officers met at Tacubaya, and, after considerable discussion, agreed upon the following articles:

1. Hostilities shall instantly and absolutely cease between the

armies of the United States of America and the United Mexican States, within thirty leagues of the capital of the latter states, to allow time to the commissioners appointed by the United States, and the commissioners to be appointed by the Mexican republic, to negotiate.

2. The armistice shall continue as long as the commissioners of the two governments may be engaged on negotiations, or until the commander of either of the said armies shall give formal notice to the other of the cessation of the armistice, and for forty-eight hours after such notice.

3. In the mean time neither army shall, within thirty leagues of the city of Mexico, commence any new fortification or military work of offence or defence, or do any thing to enlarge or strengthen any existing work or fortification of that character within the said limits.

4. Neither army shall be reinforced within the same. Any reinforcements in troops or munitions of war, other than subsistence now approaching either army, shall be stopped at the distance of twenty-eight leagues from the city of Mexico.

5. Neither army, or any detachment from it, shall advance beyond the line it at present occupies.

6. Neither army, or any detachment or individual of either, shall pass the neutral limits established by the last article, except under a flag of truce, bearing the correspondence between the two armies, or on the business authorized by the next article, and individuals of either army who may chance to straggle within the neutral limits, shall, by the opposite party, be kindly warned off or sent back to their own armies under flags of truce.

7. The American army shall not by violence obstruct the passage, from the open country into the city of Mexico, of the ordinary supplies of food necessary to the consumption of its inhabitants, or the Mexican army within the city; nor shall the Mexican authorities, civil or military, do any act to obstruct the passage of supplies, from the city or the country, needed by the American army.

8. All American prisoners of war remaining in the hands of the Mexican army, and not heretofore exchanged, shall immediately, or as soon as practicable, be restored to the American army, against a like number, having regard to rank, of Mexican prisoners captured by the American army.

9. All American citizens who were established in the city of Mexico prior to the existing war, and who have since been expelled from that city, shall be allowed to return to their respective business or families therein, without delay or molestation.

10. The better to enable the belligerent armies to execute these

articles, and to favour the great object of peace, it is further agreed between the parties, that any courier with despatches that either army shall desire to send along the line from the city of Mexico or its vicinity, to and from Vera Cruz, shall receive a safe conduct from the commander of the opposing army.

11. The administration of justice between Mexicans, according to the general and state constitutions and laws, by the local authorities of the towns and places occupied by the American forces, shall not be obstructed in any manner.

12. Persons and property shall be respected in the towns and places occupied by the American forces. No person shall be molested in the exercise of his profession; nor shall the services of any one be required without his consent. In all cases where services are voluntarily rendered, a just price shall be paid, and trade remain unmolested.

13. Those wounded prisoners who may desire to remove to some more convenient place, for the purpose of being cured of their wounds, shall be allowed to do so without molestation, they still remaining prisoners.

14. Those Mexican medical officers who may wish to attend the wounded, shall have the privilege of doing so if their services be required.

15. For the more perfect execution of this agreement, two commissioners shall be appointed, one by each party, who, in case of disagreement, shall appoint a third.

16. This convention shall have no force or effect unless approved by their excellencies, the commanders respectively of the two armies, within twenty-four hours, reckoning from 6 o'clock, A. M., of the 22d day of August, 1847.

On the presentation of this instrument to General Scott, he addressed the following note to Santa Anna and the commissioners:—"Considered, approved, and ratified, with the express understanding that the word 'supplies,' as used the second time, without qualification, in the seventh article of this military convention—American copy—shall be taken to mean, (as in both the British and American armies,) arms, munition, clothing, equipments, subsistence, (for men,) forage, and in general all the wants of an army. The word 'supplies,' in the Mexican copy, is erroneously translated 'viveres,' instead of recursos.' "

To this Santa Anna replied in the following note:—"Ratified, suppressing the 9th article, and explaining the fourth to the effect that the temporary peace of this armistice shall be observed in the capital, and twenty-eight leagues around it; and agreeing that the word 'supplies' shall be translated 'recursos,' and that it comprehends every thing which the army may need except arms and ammunition."

These conditions were ratified by General Scott, and the corrected copies of the armistice signed by both commanders.

IMMEDIATELY after the conclusion of this meeting, commissioners were appointed by the civil government of Mexico, to open negotiations with Mr. Trist for a permanent treaty of peace. They met on the 25th. Both parties were evidently anxious for peace; but unfortunately the question of boundary—always a vexed one—arose, in its most aggravated form, that of a cession by Mexico of the disputed territory in Texas to the United States. The substance of Mr. Trist's proposal was, that the boundary line of the two republics should run up the middle of the Rio Grande to the limits of New Mexico, then turning to the westward, take the course of the Gila and the Lower Colorado, and through the mouth of the latter river down the middle of the Californian gulf into the Pacific. This would have brought the south-western boundary line of the United States about ten degrees farther south, depriving Mexico of all Upper and Lower California, as well as of the districts on the Rio Grande, and leaving her the Gila for her northern boundary, at the point where the present frontier of Sonora marks her settled territories. For the region thus acquired by the United States, Mr. Trist offered a liberal sum, to be paid to Mexico at such time as might afterwards be agreed upon. To all this the Mexican commissioners consented, excepting the clause relating to the Rio Grande as the western boundary. It will be remembered that, immediately previous to the conclusion of the annexation treaty, by which Texas became a part of the United States, Mexico had declared her willingness to acknowledge the independence of her rebellious province on condition that the latter would remain a sovereign state, and *take measures for settling the disputed boundary question.* On this subject the Mexicans had always evinced a jealous tenacity approaching to infatuation. They claimed the whole territory as far as the Nueces, or none. It is highly probable that, had the United States offered them this river as a boundary after the victory of Cerro Gordo, or even of Vera Cruz, it would have been accepted. It was on this rock that the hopes of the friends of peace were destined again to split. The lands of California, and the fine harbours of the Pacific, were incalculably more valuable than the sandy wastes along the Rio Grande; yet, notwithstanding this, and in the face of the humbling proofs of the nation's inability to obtain more by force, Mexican pride remained inflexible and uncompromising, choosing rather to stake all upon the apparently hopeless issue of war, than consent to the dismemberment of her ancient territory.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many difficulties between the commissioners, negotiations were continued until the 2d of September, when Mr. Trist handed in his *ultimatum*, or final propositions, and the negotiators adjourned to meet on the 6th. Meanwhile the subject was referred to the supreme Mexican authorities, for their decision. Before the second meeting of the commissioners, circumstances, not connected with their deliberations, occurred, which hastened the resumption of hostilities. In the early part of September, some infractions of the truce, respecting supplies from the city, were committed, followed by apologies from the enemy. These were overlooked by General Scott. But, on the 5th, the American general learned that, as soon as the ultimatum had been considered in a grand council of ministers and others, Santa Anna had, on the 4th and 5th, actively commenced the strengthening of his military defences. This information was confirmed on the 6th, in consequence of which General Scott addressed to the Mexican commander the following note, dated on the same day:

"The 7th article, as also the 12th—that stipulates that *trade shall remain unmolested*—of the armistice, or military convention, which I had the honour to ratify and to exchange with your excellency the 24th ultimo, have been repeatedly violated, beginning soon after date, on the part of Mexico; and I now have good reason to believe that, within the last forty-eight hours, if not earlier, the third article of that convention has been equally violated by the same party.

"Those direct breaches of faith give to this army the most perfect right to resume hostilities against Mexico without any notice whatever; but, to allow time for possible explanation, apology, and reparation, I now give formal notice, that, unless full satisfaction on those allegations should be received by me before 12 o'clock, meridian, to-morrow, I shall consider the said armistice at an end from and after that hour."

In his reply, (dated the same day, but not delivered till the 7th,) Santa Anna expressed his astonishment at the reception of such accusations, denying imperatively that the civil or military authorities had obstructed the passage of provisions, and affirming that the few cases where difficulties of the kind had occurred, had been owing to the imprudence of the American agent. In return, he accused General Scott of preventing the owners and managers of grain mills in the vicinity from furnishing any flour to the city. The remaining part of his letter contains the following strong, and, considering the condition of the Mexican nation at the time, remarkable language:

"It is false that any new work or fortification has been undertaken, because one or two repairs have only served to place them in the same condition they were in on the day the armistice was entered into; accident or the convenience of the moment having caused the destruction of the then existing works. I had very early notice of the establishment of the battery behind the mud wall of the house called Garay's, in the town occupied by you, and did not remonstrate, because the peace of two great republics could not be made to depend upon things grave in themselves, but of little value compared to the result in which all the friends of humanity and of the prosperity of the American continent take so great an interest.

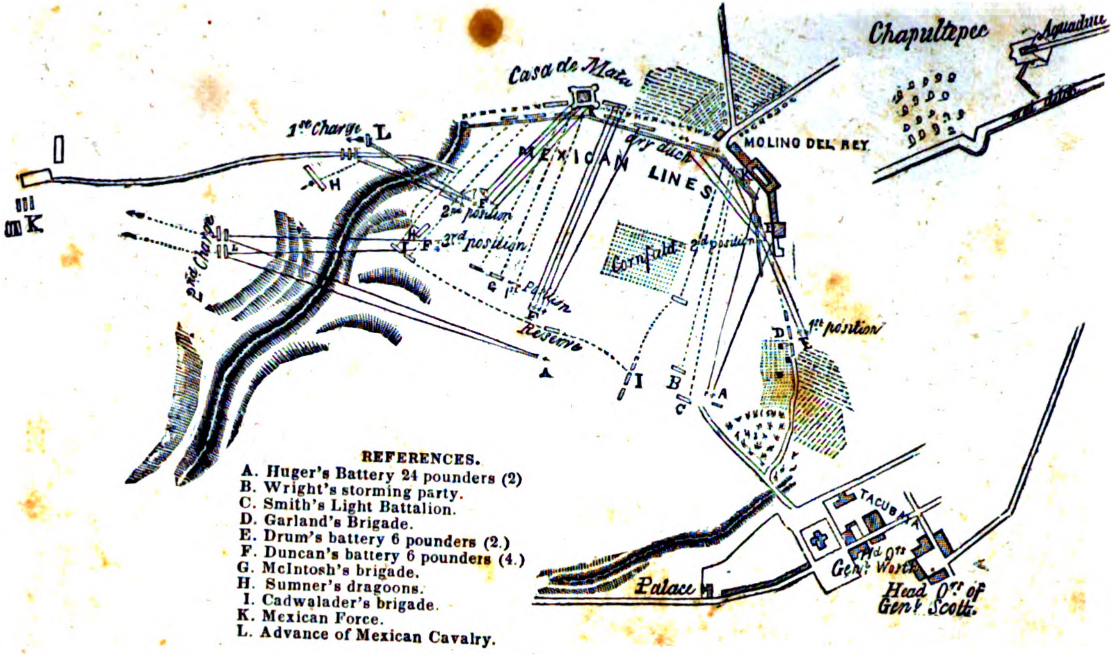
"It is not without great grief, and even indignation, that I have received communications from the cities and villages occupied by the army of your excellency, in relation to the violation of the temples consecrated to the worship of God, to the plunder of the sacred vases, and to the profanation of the images venerated by the Mexican people. Profoundly have I been afflicted by the complaints of fathers and husbands, of the violence offered to their daughters and wives; and these same cities and villages have been sacked, not only in violation of the armistice, but of the sacred principles proclaimed and respected by civilized nations. I have observed silence to the present moment, in order not to obstruct the progress of negotiations which held out the hope of terminating a scandalous war, and one which your excellency has characterized so justly as unnatural.

"But I shall desist offering apologies, because I cannot be blind to the truth, that the true cause of the threats of renewing hostilities, contained in the note of your excellency, is, that I have not been willing to sign a treaty which would lessen considerably not only the territory of the republic, but that dignity and integrity which all nations defend to the last extremity. And if these considerations have not the same weight in the mind of your excellency, the responsibility before the world, who can easily distinguish on whose side is moderation and justice, will fall upon you.

"I flatter myself that your excellency will be convinced, on calm reflection, of the weight of my reasons. But if, by misfortune, you should seek only a pretext to deprive the first city of the American continent of an opportunity to free the unarmed population of the horrors of war, there will be left me no other means of saving them but to repel force by force, with the decision and energy which my high obligations impose upon me."

The accusations contained in this answer, General Scott pronounced as "absolutely and notoriously false, both in recrimination and explanation." The correspondence closed, and all hope of a satisfactory adjustment of the subjects of dispute being at an end, both parties prepared for another appeal to arms.

PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF MOLINO DEL REY.


Chapultepec
Aqueduct
Casa de Mata
MOLINO DEL REY
MEXICAN LINES
dry ditch
Cornfield
1st Charge
2nd Charge
2nd position
3rd position
1st Position
2nd position
1st position
Reserve
TACUBAYA
Palace
Hd Qrs Genl Worth
Head Qrs of Genl Scott
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
K
L

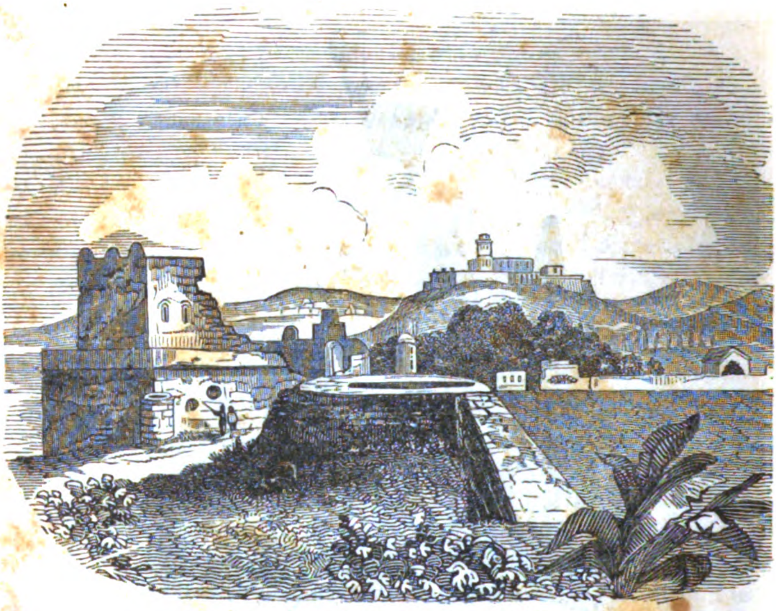
REFERENCES.

A. Huger's Battery 24 pounders (2)
B. Wright's storming party.
C. Smith's Light Battalion.
D. Garland's Brigade.
E. Drum's battery 6 pounders (2.)
F. Duncan's battery 6 pounders (4.)
G. McIntosh's brigade.
H. Sumner's dragoons.
I. Cadwalader's brigade.
K. Mexican Force.
L. Advance of Mexican Cavalry.

CHAPTER XXIX.

STORMING OF MOLINO DEL REY.

ON the 5th of September, one day previous to the termination of the armistice, the American general learned that many church bells had been sent from the city to a foundry called Casa Mata, to be cast into guns, and that immense quantities of powder, balls, and other military stores were arriving at the same place. As soon as the truce terminated, General Scott determined on an immediate attack upon this place, hoping to deprive the enemy of their cannon and ammunition, both of which were at this time of the greatest importance to them. This determination was further strengthened by the consideration that recent events had deprived the enemy of more than three-fourths of the guns



Molino del Rey—Chapultepec in the distance.

necessary to defend the strong works at the eight principal gates of the city, which rendered a free communication with the cannon foundry highly essential to Santa Anna's operations. This communication could be cut off only by taking the formidable castle upon the heights of Chapultepec, situated between the city and Casa Mata, and overlooking both. For this dangerous operation the army was not altogether ready, and the earnest desire of General Scott was to avoid altogether, if possible, an attack upon this place, and approach the city by the distant southern approaches, should they be found less formidable. Preparatory to attempting this, he determined upon destroying the foundry and stores at Molino del Rey. The execution of this plan was intrusted to Brevet Major-General Worth.

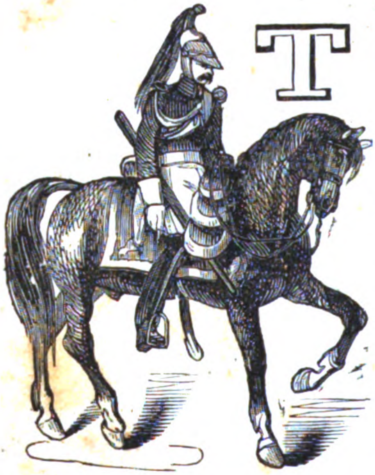
On the morning of the 7th, Captain Mason, of the engineers, made a close and daring reconnoissance of the lines collateral to Chapultepec, ascertaining the enemy's position to be as follows:—The left resting upon and occupying the strong stone buildings of Molino del Rey, near a grove at the foot of Chapultepec hill, and directly under the guns of its castle; the right resting upon Casa Mata, at the base of a ridge sloping gradually from the heights above the village of Tacubaya to the plain below. Midway between these buildings was the enemy's field-battery, supported on both sides by infantry.

THIS reconnoissance was repeated, and verified by Captain Mason and Colonel Duncan, on the afternoon of the same day—the result indicating that the centre was the enemy' weak point, and that of his flanks, the left bordering on Molino del Rey, was the stronger. Generals Scott and Worth accompanied the engineers during the afternoon. The examination, however, was far from being satisfactory, since, although it afforded a fair observation of the configuration of the ground, and the extent of the enemy's forces, yet, on account of the defences being skilfully masked, only an imperfect idea was obtained of their actual strength.

On the same afternoon, a large body of the enemy was seen hovering about Molino del Rey, within a mile and a third of Tacubaya, where General Scott was stationed with his staff and Worth's division. They did not venture an attack, and the American commander would not derange his plans by offering battle.

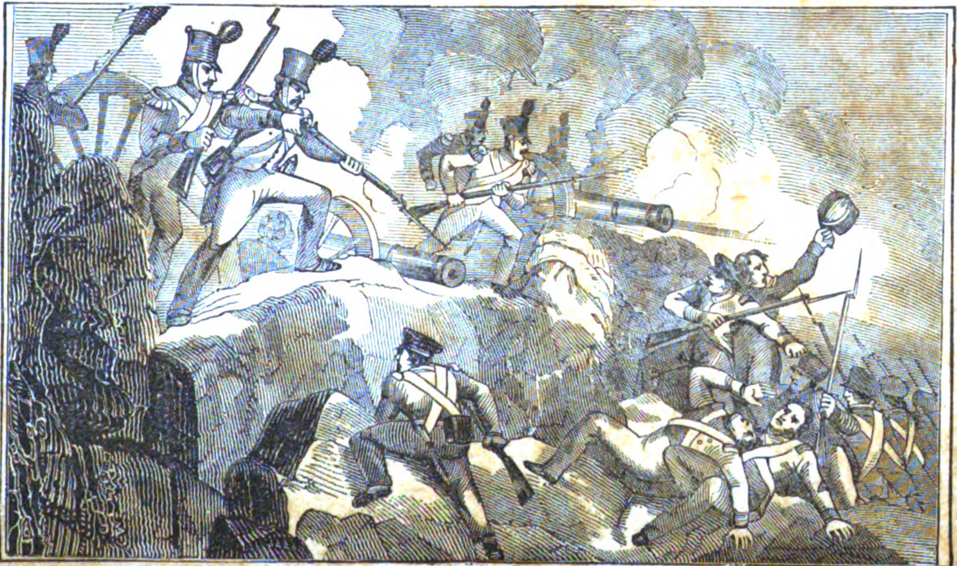
General Worth's division was reinforced by two hundred and seventy dragoons and mounted riflemen, under Major Sumner, Cadwalader's infantry and voltigeur regiments, seven hundred and eighty-four strong, three pieces of field artillery, under Captain Drum, and two twenty-four pound battering guns, under Captain Huger. The whole command, thus reinforced, numbered three thousand two hundred men.

The orders of General Scott were that the division should attack and destroy the lines and defences between the Casa Mata and Molino del Rey, capture the enemy's artillery, destroy the machinery and material supposed to be in the foundry, but under no circumstances to make an attack upon Chapultepec. After carrying the works, the troops were to be withdrawn immediately to Tacubaya. The object of attack being connected with Chapultepec, it became necessary to isolate it from the defences of the castle. To effect this object, Colonel Garland's brigade, strengthened by two pieces of Captain Drum's battery, was posted on the right so as to intercept any reinforcements from Chapultepec, and be within sustaining distance of the assaulting party, and Huger's battering guns. The latter were placed on the ridge, five or six hundred yards from Molino del Rey, so as to play upon and detach it from Chapultepec. The assaulting party designed to act against the enemy's centre, consisting of five hundred picked men and officers, commanded by Brevet Major Wright, was stationed on the ridge to the left of the battering guns. Colonel Clarke's brigade, under Colonel McIntosh, was placed farther up the ridge, near Duncan's battery, so as either to protect the American left flank, to sustain the assaulting column, or to discomfit the enemy as circumstances would require. Cadwalader's brigade was held in reserve, in a position on the ridge between the battering guns and McIntosh's brigade, at easy supporting distance from both. Major Sumner, with his cavalry, was ordered to the extreme flank, to act as his own judgment might dictate; and the general disposition of the artillery was confided to Colonel Duncan.



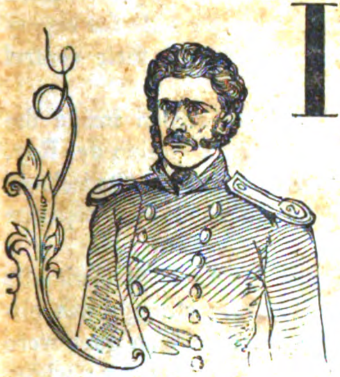
THESE preparations were designed and executed in the most desirable manner, exhibiting in the subsequent result, the military abilities of the general who planned the whole attack, and of those who carried it into effect. The artillery was placed in the best possible position for preventing the arrival of any support from the castle, by breaking the continuous line of defences leading to that place, and distracting the garrison during the charge of Wright's party. This was posted so as to experience the least difficulty from the nature of the ground, and the presence of the enemy's cavalry. The latter were watched by the intrepid Sumner, and at a well-chosen position, McIntosh's troops were placed in general superintendence of the whole. But so strong were the Mexican defences, and throughout the whole line so skilfully masked, that but for a strong supporting reserve, Wright's charge—the soul of the entire assault—would probably have failed. Such support was afforded by Cadwalader's brigade, which during the action was called into active service, and contributed in no slight degree to victory.

At three o'clock, A. M., of the 8th, the division commenced its march by columns, each taking a different route. So accurately had every thing been arranged, that notwithstanding the darkness of the night, and the irregularity of the ground, the troops at daylight were found posted in the different positions with as much precision as though on parade. Very soon after the dawn of day, the report of Huger's guns, opening upon Molino del Rey, gave the signal for attack. So heavy were the discharges, that in a short time masses of masonry fell with tremendous noise, and the whole line of intrenchments began to shake. This, uniting with the roar of cannon, and



Storming of Molino del Rey.

cheering of soldiers, produced a scene of confusion peculiarly distressing. The enemy answered each discharge in rapid succession, unfolding at intervals to the sight of their antagonists' batteries, and systems of defence of the strongest character, but hitherto masked.



IN the interim, while the cannonade was going on, Major Wright was preparing his troops for the attack. Stationed on an eminence, he had a full view of the artillery operations, and could determine with great ease, upon the exact direction in which to lead his men. All things being in readiness, he dashed down the slope, guided by Captain Mason and Lieutenant Foster, and followed by his whole command. At this stirring spectacle, the remainder of the division sent up a shout which momentarily drowned the roar of artillery; while at the same moment, as though in desperate defiance, the central batteries of the enemy opened their fearful discharges, sweeping down man and officer in terrible and indiscriminate slaughter. The cheering died away at such a spectacle, and with unuttered forebodings, at the unexpected sight, the reserve and support leaned forward to await the result. Yet in the midst of the unexpected showers of fire which were launched upon them, Wright and his gallant men rushed on, gained the lines, and sweeping through a storm of musketry and canister shot, drove infantry and artillerymen before them at the bayonet's point, seized the large field battery, drove off the cannoneers, and trailed its guns upon the retreating masses.

But the battle was not yet decided. After retreating to a short distance, the enemy suddenly halted, rallied, and on observing the smallness of the force by which they had been attacked, returned with renewed energy to the conflict. Suddenly a flash, like lightning, ran along their whole line, pouring forth a discharge which struck down eleven officers out of the fourteen composing the command, with non-commissioned officers and men in proportion. Brevet Major Wright, Captain Mason, and Lieutenant Foster were among the severely wounded. At the same time the windows and roofs of buildings were lined with infantry, who united their fire with that of the main body. At so overwhelming a loss, the party was thrown into confusion, and the eagle eye of General Worth foresaw that another such discharge, would snatch victory from its grasp. Accordingly the right wing of Cadwalader's brigade, and the light battalion, held to cover Captain Huger's battery, were immediately ordered forward to its support. Coming rapidly into action, these troops reached the shattered remnant of Major Wright's party, at a most seasonable moment. The struggle with the enemy was close, but short. They were again routed, and their central positions fully carried and occupied.

This victory gave the Americans an important station inside the enemy's works, and separated the Casa Mata from Molino del Rey, and its adjoining fortifications. These, therefore, formed two isolated points of attack, each of which could be attacked by a separate party, without danger from the other.

The assault upon the enemy's left was intrusted to Garland's brigade, sustained by Drum's artillery. Here the struggle was obstinate and bloody. The manner in which the American guns were served drew forth shouts of applause from the whole army; while, on the other hand, the powerful batteries of Molino del Rey were worked in a manner which evinced the determination of the enemy to regain the day. The loss of the assailants was heavy, but they at length succeeded in forcing the position and driving the garrison from their guns. The Mexicans fled towards Chapultepec, suffering heavily from their own guns, which were turned upon them, and continued to fire until they were beyond reach.

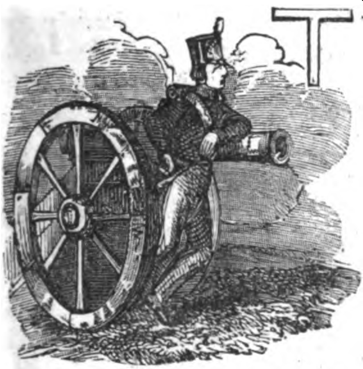
SIMULTANEOUSLY with this assault, Duncan's battery opened upon the Mexican right, so as to mask an assault upon it, by Colonel McIntosh. The whole field was now a scene of uproar, the battle raging, mostly of artillery, throughout the entire line of defences, from Casa Mata to Molino del Rey. As McIntosh's troops moved to the attack, they came in front of Duncan's battery, which was consequently obliged to suspend its fire. The command then moved steadily to the assault. On approaching the Casa Mata, it was discovered to be, not an ordinary field intrenchment, as had been supposed, but a strong stone citadel, built in the Spanish style, with bastioned intrenchments and impassable ditches, which had recently been repaired and enlarged. The apparent difficulty of the undertaking was thus ten-fold increased; but still the soldiers pressed on without the least diminution of ardour. The batteries of the enemy were for a long time silent, as though their attendants were doubtful whether to open or not. But this was but the deceitful allurement, whose object was to get the prey completely within grasp. On arriving within musket-shot, the Americans were greeted with a storm of grape and canister, before which their front ranks melted away, and many of the best officers were killed or wounded. Without intermission was this kept up, until their lacerated columns had reached the slope of the parapet leading to the citadel. Here amid the withering showers which smote their ranks, the exhausted troops were obliged to halt. Their advance had been over a long rugged road, in front of their own batteries and part of the time without their support. A large proportion of their number had been killed or wounded, including the three senior officers, Brevet Colonel McIntosh, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, and Major Waite,—the second killed, and the first and last seriously wounded. As they stood for a few moments on the slope, the Casa Mata continued to pour its fire upon them, and perplexed with the change of commanders consequent on the fall of Colonel McIntosh, the brigade fell into confusion, and withdrew to Duncan's battery.

THE latter branch of service, from the time of its being covered by McIntosh's troops, so as to prevent a continuance of its fire on the enemy, had been arduously engaged in another part of the field. A large cavalry force had appeared outside the enemy's works, on the extreme left of the American line; and against this Colonel Duncan moved, supported by the voltigeurs of Cadwalader's brigade. As the cavalry galloped into canister range, the whole battery opened upon them with great effect, driving back their heavy squadrons in disorder. At this moment, Major Sumner, who had been carefully watching the enemy all day, moved to the front and changed direction in admirable order, under a most appalling fire from Casa Mata, of which he was within pistol range. His loss was very severe, numbering five officers, thirty-nine soldiers, and one hundred and four horses. The exposure was, however, unavoidable, in consequence of a deep ditch, which it was impossible to cross, until he had arrived close to the Mexican intrenchments. After passing the ravine, he formed his command in line, facing the enemy's cavalry, and prepared to receive their charge. At seeing this they suddenly halted, and shortly afterwards retired. The major continued to hold his command on the left flank, until the battle was won, changing his position from time to time, with every movement of the cavalry. During the whole time, his men behaved with coolness and bravery; and notwithstanding the number and rapidity of their evolutions, they succeeded, chiefly through the indefatigable exertions of Captain Hardee, in avoiding all confusion. The major was joined, soon after the commencement of the action, by Lieutenant-Colonel Moore, who, although declining the command, remained with him during the day. Colonel Harney, who was unwell, also came upon the field during the action, and after observing the arrangements, expressed himself satisfied, and left Sumner to execute them, "for which," archly observes the major, in his report, "I am deeply obliged to him."

THE repulse of the second brigade enabled Colonel Duncan to reopen his battery upon the Casa Mata, which the enemy, after a short and well-directed fire, abandoned. The Americans rushed into the works with loud cheers, seized the cannon, and turned them upon their former owners.

The enemy was now driven from every part of the field, leaving his strong lines in possession of the assailants. The quantity of stores within the two principal works fell far short of what had been anticipated, thus proving false many of the reports previously received upon that subject. In obedience to the commands of General Scott, the Casa Mata was blown up, and such of the captured ammunition as could not be used, together with the cannon-moulds found in Molino del Rey, was destroyed.

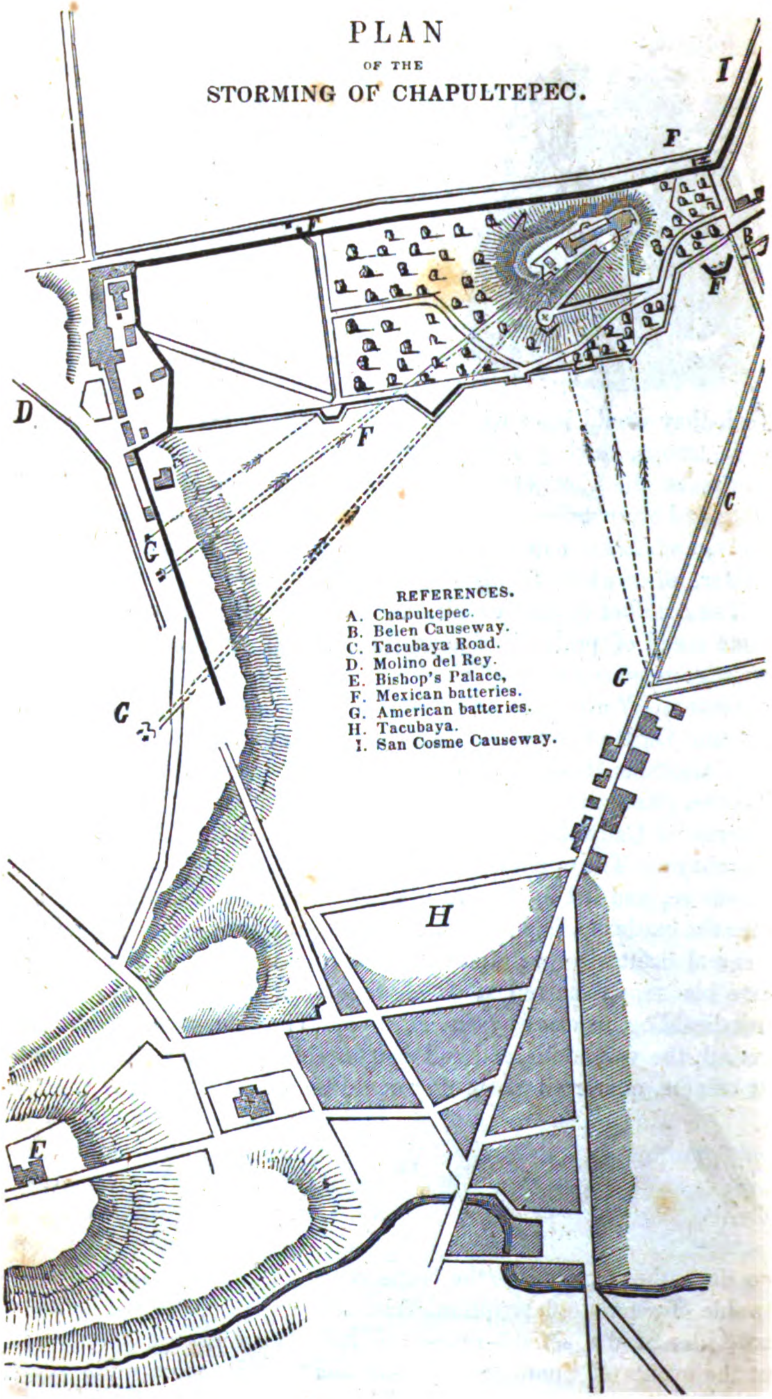
Thus, after several hours incessant cannonading and fighting, the Americans stormed and carried an entire line of strong fortresses, defended by fourteen thousand men, securing eight hundred prisoners, all the guns, a large quantity of small arms, ammunition and other stores. Fifty-two commissioned officers were among the taken. Generals Valdarez and Leon, the second and third in command, were killed. The total loss of the enemy was about three thousand, exclusive of two thousand who deserted after the rout.



THESE great results were not obtained without a proportionate loss on the part of the victors. Besides being numerically great, the list of killed and wounded embraced the names of some of the brightest ornaments of the service. Of the first were Captains Merrill, E. K. Smith, Ayres, and Lieutenants Strong, Farry, Burwell, and Burbank. "All of these gallant men," says General Worth, "fell as, when it pleased God, they would have wished to fall, fighting bravely at the head of their troops, leaving a bright example to the service, and spotless names to the cherished recollections of comrades." Among the wounded were brevet Major Wright, Captains Mason, Walker, and Cady, and Lieutenants Shackleford, Daniels, Clarke, Snelling, and Foster, all of whom highly distinguished themselves.

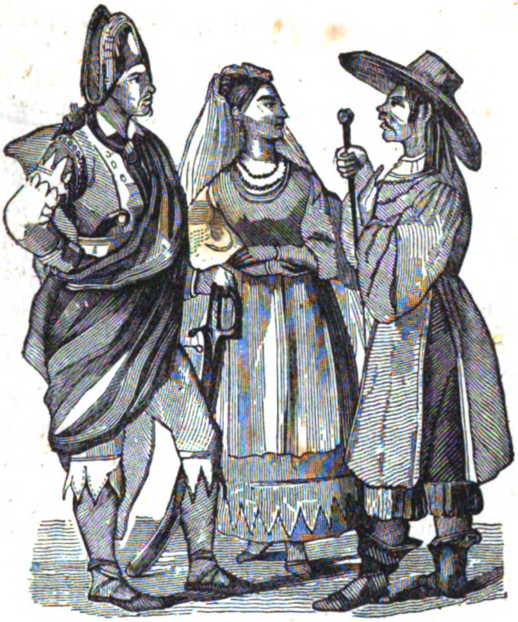
The conduct of both cavalry and artillery was admirable; and the same meed of praise is due to Sumner's dragoons. General Cadwalader rendered most efficient service, and received the encomiums of General Worth. Among the other officers similarly noticed, were Colonel Garland, Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan, brevet Colonel McIntosh, Captains Huger and Drum, Lieutenants Kirkham, Nichols, and Thorne, (the latter of whom captured a regimental standard,) and the officers of Cadwalader's brigade. Worth withdrew his brigade to Tacubaya. The operations of the day had thrown the enemy on the defensive, and left no further obstruction to an attack upon the city, save the castle of Chapultepec. Knowing the strength of this fortress, General Scott wisely refrained from an immediate attack, preferring to give his troops the repose which they so much needed, rather than risk disabling his army by over exertion. The dead were collected and buried, the wounded rendered comfortable, and each division, with its officers, quartered where they could be protected from the weather.

PLAN
OF THE
STORMING OF CHAPULTEPEC.



REFERENCES.

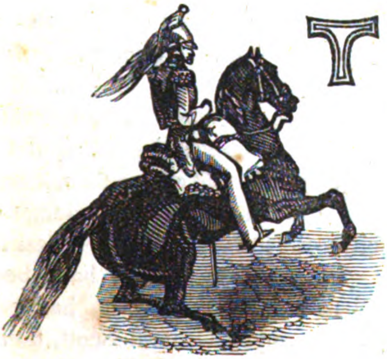
- A. Chapultepec.
- B. Belen Causeway.
- C. Tacubaya Road.
- D. Molino del Rey.
- E. Bishop's Palace,
- F. Mexican batteries.
- G. American batteries.
- H. Tacubaya.
- I. San Cosme Causeway.



Mexican Costumes.

CHAPTER XXX.

STORMING OF CHAPULTEPEC.

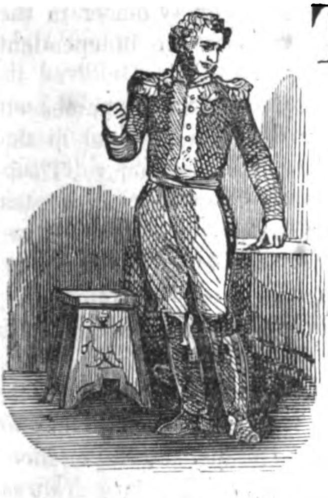


THE taking of Molino del Rey had cut off the fortress of Chapultepec from all immediate connection with any of the surrounding fortifications. The assault upon it was the next great event of the war, and the first of that brilliant series to which General Scott gives the general name, Battle of Mexico. Of that momentous action, which continued for more than two days, the storming of the castle is the only occurrence which is capable of separate description. The difficulty of conveying an adequate idea of the actions of August has been formerly mentioned; but the events of Contreras and Churubusco are simple when compared to those attending the taking of the capital. The plan of attack in the latter brought out the abilities of every officer in the army, simultaneously, and, with but few exceptions, in independent commands.

Immediately after the victory of the 8th, General Scott commenced a series of strict and daring reconnoissances of the ground in the vicinity of the capital, and the principal works of the enemy. These were conducted by the able engineers, Captain Lee, and Lieutenants Stephens, Tower, and Beauregard. This service was, in point of danger, equal to battle, stations being frequently chosen within full range of the enemy's batteries, and even within musketry range of the works. The observations were directed principally to the southern defences, the strongly fortified gates of Piedad, San Antonio, San Angel, or Niño Perdido, and Paseo de la Vega. These presented a chain of ditches, intrenchments, gullies, breastworks, towers, and mines, appalling to any general save one of the first military genius and experience. "This city," says the American commander, while speaking of these defences, "stands on a slight swell of ground, near the centre of an irregular basin, and is girdled with a ditch in its greatest extent—a navigable canal of great breadth and depth—very difficult to bridge in the presence of an enemy, and serving at once for drainage, custom-house purposes, and military defence, having eight entrances or gates, over arches, each of which we found defended by a system of strong works, that seemed to require nothing but some men and guns to be impregnable.

"Outside and within the cross-fires of those gates, we found, to the south, other obstacles but little less formidable. All the approaches near the city are over elevated causeways, cut in many places, (to oppose us,) and flanked on both sides by ditches, also of unusual dimensions. The numerous cross-roads are flanked in like manner, having bridges at the intersections, recently broken. The meadows thus checkered are, moreover, in many spots, under water or marshy; for, it will be remembered, we were in the midst of the wet season, though with less rain than usual, and we could not wait for the fall of the neighbouring lakes, and the consequent drainage of the wet grounds at the edge of the city—the lowest in the whole basin."

An attack upon the city in this quarter would perhaps have been successful; but it would have been at a loss greater than has ever yet been experienced by an American army. General Scott, therefore, with that regard to the lives of his soldiers which has ever formed a prominent feature in his character, and rejecting the vain glory acquired by gaining a great battle at any expense, promptly determined to avoid the network of obstacles on the south, and seek less unfavourable approaches by a sudden inversion towards the west.



"TO economize the lives of our gallant officers and men," says the general, "as well as to insure success, it became indispensable that this resolution should be long masked from the enemy; and again, that the new movement, when discovered, should be mistaken for a feint, and the old as indicating our true and ultimate point of attack." This design could be executed only by means of a well conducted stratagem, whose most important part would be to prevent the enemy from removing his guns in the southern defences to the new point of attack. This was executed in a manner which, while securing the lives of the troops, threw the balance of advantages in their hands, and afforded one more instance of the eminent scientific abilities of the man who, with a handful of troops, had fought his way through hostile armies to the gates of the enemy's capital. We give the arrangements of his plan in his own words:

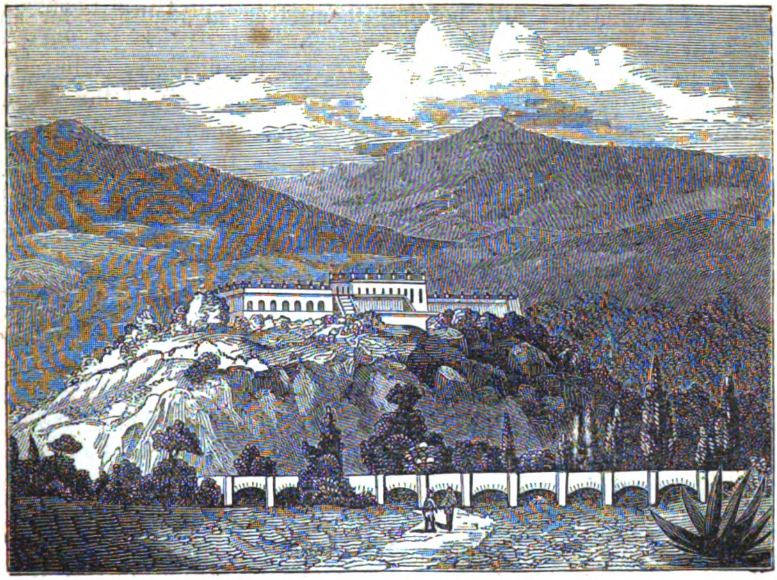
"Accordingly, on the spot, the 11th, I ordered Quitman's division from Coyoacan, to join Pillow, *by daylight*, before the southern gates, and then that the two major-generals, with their divisions, should, *by night*, proceed (two miles) to join me at Tacubaya, where I was quartered with Worth's division. Twiggs, with Riley's brigade, and Captains Taylor's and Steptoe's field-batteries—the latter of twelve-pounders—was left in front of those gates to manœuver, to threaten, or to make false attacks, in order to occupy and deceive the enemy. Twiggs's other brigade (Smith's) was left at supporting distance in the rear, at San Angel, till the morning of the 13th, and also to support our general depot at Mixcoac. The stratagem against the south was admirably executed throughout the 12th, and down to the afternoon of the 13th, when it was too late for the enemy to recover from the effects of his delusion.

"The first step in the new movement was to carry Chapultepec, a natural and isolated mound, of great elevation, strongly fortified at its base, on its acclivities and heights. Besides a numerous garrison, here was the military college of the republic, with a large number of sub-lieutenants and other students. Those works were within direct gunshot of the village of Tacubaya, and, until carried, we could not approach the city on the west without making a circuit too wide and too hazardous.

"In the course of the same night, (that of the 11th,) heavy batteries within easy ranges, were established. No. 1, on our right, under the command of Captain Drum, 4th artillery, (relieved the next day, for some hours, by Lieutenant Andrews, of the 3d,) and No. 2, commanded by Lieutenant Hagner, ordnance—both supported by Quitman's division. Nos. 3 and 4, on the opposite side, supported by Pillow's division, were commanded, the former by Captain Brooks and Lieutenant S. S. Anderson, 2d artillery, alternately, and the latter by Lieutenant Stone, ordnance. The batteries were traced by Captain Huger and Captain Lee, engineer, and constructed by them, with the able assistance of the young officers of those corps and the artillery.

"To prepare for an assault, it was foreseen that the play of the batteries might run into the second day; but recent captures had not only trebled our siege pieces, but also our ammunition; and we knew that we should greatly augment both by carrying the place. I was, therefore, in no haste in ordering an assault before the works were well crippled by our missiles."

THE disposition of forces thus sketched should be borne in mind while taking a survey of the subsequent operations. The whole army was divided into two great sections, each performing duties distinct from the other, yet essential to the success of the final operations. One of these amused the enemy, and prevented him from employing, to much effect, his strongest forces; the other conducted the assault at numerous points of the western defences. The former duty was intrusted to General Twiggs, with Riley's brigade and two batteries; while Smith's brigade remained as a supporting reserve. At the same time, the divisions of Quitman and Pillow marched by night from the neighbourhood of the southern defences, and joined General Scott at Tacubaya, preparatory to the assault upon Chapultepec. This hill lay between Twiggs's station and the western portion of the city, whither General Scott designed to make his attack. To pass between it and the city wall was impossible; and to march around on the opposite side would have consumed so much time as to unfold the stratagem to the enemy, and



Chapultepec.

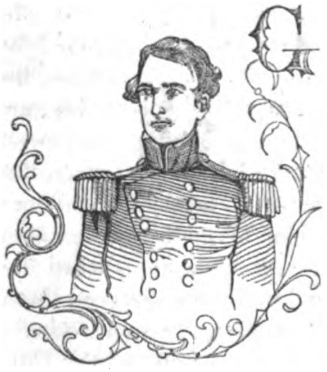
thus defeat one important object of it. There remained, therefore, no alternative but to storm the fortress, since, by so doing, the enemy would still be in the dark as to the ultimate point of attack, and might easily be induced to believe that, in case of capturing it, the Americans would resume their station near the southern gates. Subsequent disclosures proved that they laboured under this delusion.

The two batteries of Captain Drum and Lieutenant Hagner, supporting Quitman's divison, and those of Captain Brooks and Lieutenant Stone, supporting Pillow, opened on the castle, early on the 12th. The bombardment and cannonade were superintended by Captain Huger, and continued during the whole day. During the continuance of this dreary work, Twiggs was actively plying his guns on the southern side, in order to prevent the arrival of reinforcements at Chapultepec. The bombardment at length became so severe, that all the garrison, excepting a number sufficient to manage, abandoned their works, and formed on a secure position of the hill, where they could easily return in case of an assault. As night approached, the fire of the assailants necessarily ceased; but it was observed that a good impression had been made upon the castle and its outworks.

No changes of position were made during the night of the 12th, so that early on the following morning the guns reopened upon the castle. At the same moment those of Twiggs were heard battering the gates of San Antonio and Piedad. The Mexicans were again observed upon the hill, holding themselves in readiness for an assault.

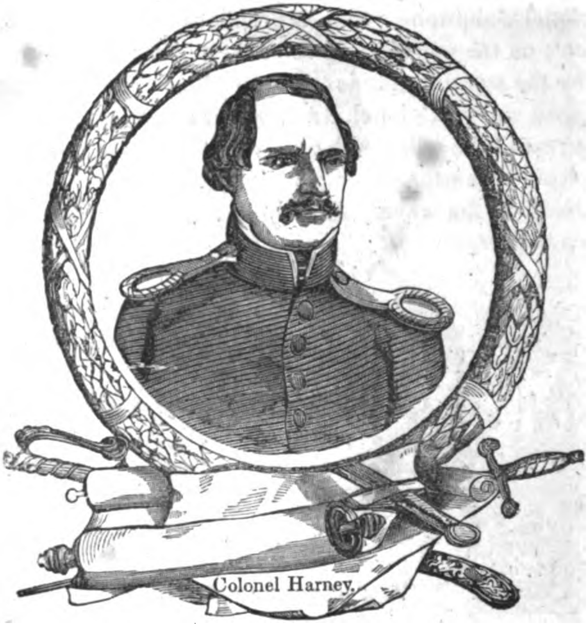
Meanwhile the general-in-chief was actively preparing to storm the work. The force designed for this service consisted of two columns, acting independently and on different sides of the hill. The first was led by General Pillow, the second by General Quitman—the commands of these officers being reinforced by corps from other divisions. On the previous evening, Worth had received orders to designate a party from his division to assist Pillow, and immediately organized a command of two hundred and sixty men, with ten officers, under Captain McKenzie. He was also advised to take position with the remainder of his division and support Pillow, in case that officer should request his aid. He accordingly chose a favourable position, and reported himself to Pillow. At the same time Smith's brigade was ordered to proceed towards the hill and support Quitman's column. These troops arrived on the following morning, after marching over an exposed road two miles in length. Twiggs also supplied a reinforcement to Quitman's storming column, about equal in number to that from Worth's division, and commanded by Captain Casey.

The signal for the march of the storming parties was the momentary cessation of fire from the heavy batteries. At about eight o'clock on the morning of the 13th, General Scott dismissed an aid to General Pillow, and another to Quitman, to inform them that this was about to be given. Immediately the whole field was covered with the troops of the assailing parties, moving into position. At the same moment a number of Mexican soldiers outside the fort, rushed into it and prepared to resist the assault.



GENERAL PILLOW, in the morning, had placed two field-pieces of Magruder's field-battery inside the Molino del Rey, to clear a sand-bag breastwork which the enemy had constructed without the main wall surrounding Chapultepec, so as to annoy any party assailing the principal works. Through the houses and walls of the mills, he had also placed a howitzer battery, to aid in driving the enemy from a strong intrenchment which extended nearly across the front of the forest and commanded the only approach to Chapultepec on that side. At the same time he placed in position four companies of the voltigeur regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Johnstone, with instructions to advance by a rapid movement, on the outside and enter the inclosure, after it had been gained by the storming parties. Four other companies of voltigeurs were placed under Colonel Andrews, at a narrow gateway opening from the rear of the mills, with orders to advance in front, and uniting with Colonel Johnstone's command, to deploy as skirmishers and drive a body of the enemy from some large trees among which it had taken shelter.

EVERY thing being now in readiness, the heavy batteries were silenced, and immediately the storming columns rushed forward to the attack. Knowing too well the object of this movement, the Mexicans opened all their batteries, the fires from which swept every approach and glared in front of the advancing troops like a volcano. On they rushed, driving the enemy from the woods, and reaching the hill, commenced the ascent. At this moment, General Pillow was struck from his horse by a grape-shot, and the command devolved on Cadwalader. The former general would not leave the field; but employed some of his men to carry him up the hill, in order that he might be a witness of the result. Under command of the intrepid officer from Pennsylvania, the troops entered the enemy's drizzling fires, and laboured over the steep rocks. "The broken acclivity," says the general-in-chief, while describing Cadwalader's advance, "was still to be ascended, and a strong redoubt midway to be carried, before reaching the castle on the heights. The advance of our brave officers, though necessarily slow, was unwavering, over rocks, chasms, and mines, and under the hottest fire of cannon and musketry. The redoubt now yielded to resistless valour, and the shouts that followed announced to the castle the fate that impended. The enemy were steadily driven from shelter to shelter. The retreat allowed not time to fire a single mine without the certainty of blowing up friend and foe. Those who at a distance attempted to apply matches to the long trains were shot down by our men. There was death below as well as above ground. At length the ditch and wall of the main work were reached; the scaling-ladders were brought up and planted by the storming parties; some of the daring spirits first in the assault were cast down—killed or wounded; but a lodgment was soon made; streams of heroes followed; all opposition was overcome, and several of our regimental colours were flung out



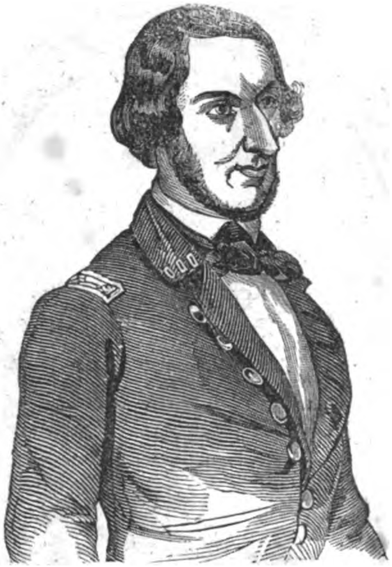
Colonel Harney.

from the upper walls, amidst long continued shouts and cheers, which sent dismay into the capital. No scene could have been more animating or glorious."

Conspicuous in this charge was the gallant Colonel Ransom, of the 9th infantry, who met a soldier's death while leading his troops up the summit to the castle. He was shot in the forehead. Major Seymour succeeded him, and on arriving before the walls, mounted the ladders, leaped upon the parapet, and tore down with his own hands the Mexican colours.

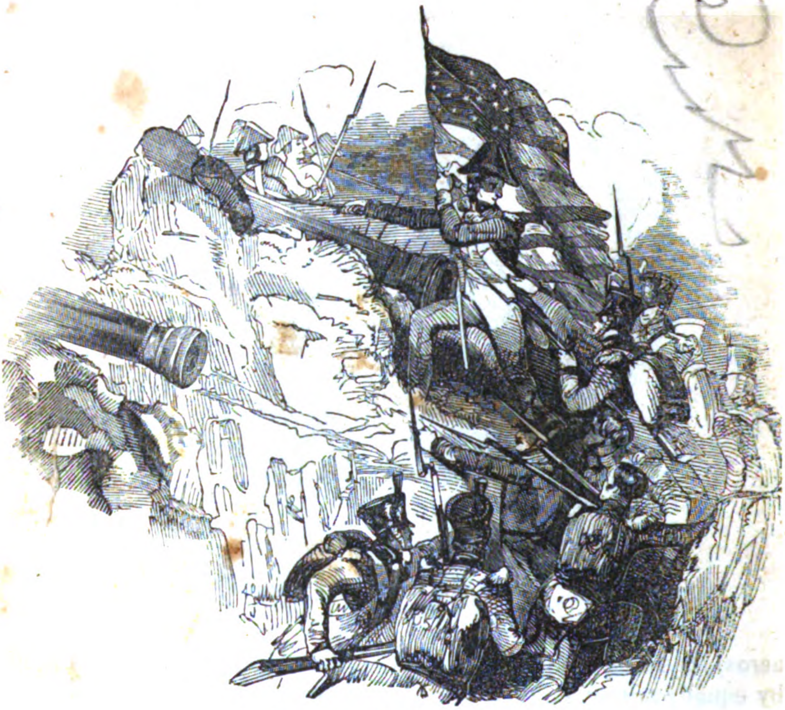
Simultaneously with this attack, General Quitman's troops approached the fortress on the opposite side. At early dawn he had opened his batteries with much effect, and commenced preparations for the assault. Ladders, pick-axes, and crows were placed in the hands of a pioneer storming party of one hundred and twenty men, selected from all corps of the division, and commanded by Major Twiggs. At this time, General Smith arrived with his brigade, and was instructed to move in reserve, on the right flank of the assaulting column, to protect it from skirmishes or more serious attacks, and if possible, cross the aqueduct leading to the city, and cut off the enemy's retreat.

These dispositions being completed, the whole command, at the preconcerted signal, moved forward with confidence and enthusiasm. At the base of the hill constituting part of the defences, and directly



Major (now Colonel) Seymour.

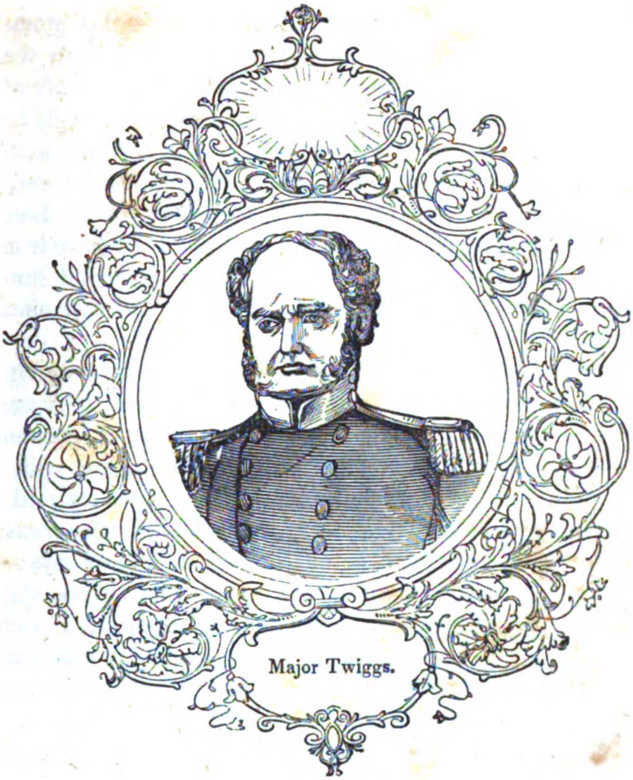
across the line of advance, were strong batteries, flanked on the right by equally strong buildings, and by a heavy stone wall, about fifteen feet high, which extended around the base of the hill, towards the west. The troops were, however, partially covered by some dilapidated buildings at about two hundred yards' distance. Between these and the wall, extended a low meadow, whose long grass concealed a number of wet ditches, by which it was intersected; and to this point the command, partially screened, advanced by a flank movement, having the storming parties in front, who sustained a heavy fire from the enemy's fortress, batteries, and breastworks. Here, under partial cover of the ruins, the advance was halted, and upon the appearance of the New York and South Carolina regiments, General Shields was directed to move them obliquely to the left, across the low ground to the wall at the base of the hill. Encouraged by the presence of the man who had led them to victory at Churubusco, these tried regiments waded through deep ditches, while the water around them was foaming with the enemy's shot, and rushing forward together effected a lodgment at the wall. Similar orders were given to Lieutenant-Colonel Geary, and executed by his regiment with equal alacrity and success. While cheering on his men, General Shields was severely wounded in the arm; but no inducement could persuade him to leave his command, or quit the field. About the same time, the esteemed Lieutenant-Colonel Baxter was



Storming of Chapultepec.

mortally wounded, Lieutenant-Colonel Geary disabled, and Captain Van O'Linda killed.

During this advance, Brigadier-General Smith was driving back skirmishing parties of the enemy on the left; Lieutenant Benjamin, at the first battery, was pouring shot after shot into the fortress and woods on the slope, while Lieutenant Hunt, having obtained a favourable position in the rear, also threw shells and shrapnell shot into the enemy's lines with good effect. At this moment, General Quitman ordered the storming parties to the assault. Led by their gallant officers, they rushed on in one unbroken tide, while the batteries from behind continued to pour shells and shot over their heads into the enemy's fortress. The Mexican fire was tremendous; but without pausing for a moment, the Americans swept on until they reached the outer breastworks. Here, for a short time, the contest was terrible. Hand to hand the fierce antagonists met each other's strokes, while, as though pausing for the result, died away the loud noise of opposing batteries. Swords and bayonets were crossed, rifles clubbed, and friend and foe mingled in one confused struggling mass. Resistance, however, to the desperate valour of the assailants



Major Twiggs.

was vain. The batteries and strong works were swept, and the ascent to Chapultepec laid open on that side. Seven pieces of artillery, one thousand muskets, and five hundred and fifty prisoners were the trophies of victory. Among the prisoners were one hundred officers, including a general and ten colonels.

Captain Casey, the gallant leader of the storming party of regulars, having received a severe wound when directly in front of the batteries, the command devolved on Captain Paul, who, during the remainder of the day, distinguished himself for his bravery. The storming party from the volunteer division also lost its commander, the lamented Major Twiggs—and was led, during the remainder of the attack, by Captain James Miller.

At the same time the volunteer regiments on the left, animated by a generous enthusiasm, were ascending the hill on the south side. Fighting their way through every obstacle, these brave men fell in with their comrades of General Pillow's division; and side by side, amid the storm of battle, the colours of the two commands were seen struggling together up the steep ascent. At this moment the American batteries, which had continued their fire upon the castle over the heads of the assailants, ceased; and immediately after the troops gained the summit. The short but obstinate struggle has been described. The veteran Mexican, General Bravo, with a number of other officers was captured, by Lieutenant Charles Brower, of the New York regiment. In the assault upon the works, Lieutenant Steele, with a portion of the storming party, had advanced in front of the batteries, towards the left, scaled the outer wall through a breach near the top, ascended a hill in front, and was among the first upon the battlements.

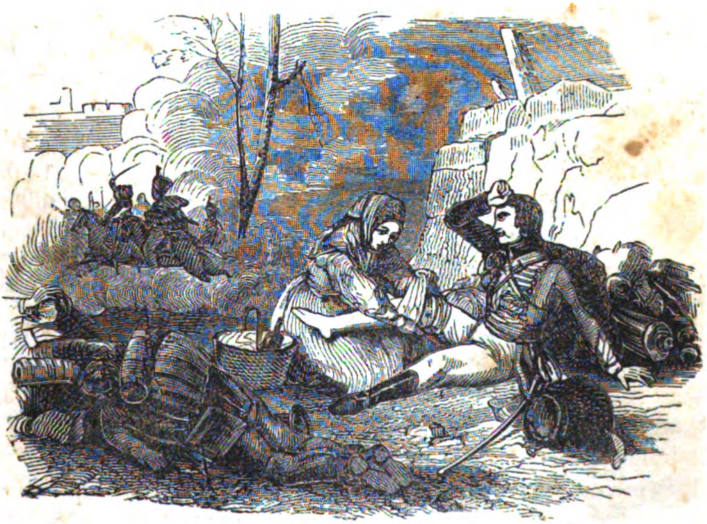
After giving the necessary directions for the safe keeping of the prisoners, General Quitman ordered his troops to form near the aqueduct, and hastily ascended the hill, for the purpose of reconnoitering the enemy's position in front of the city. There he met with Major-General Pillow, who, as formerly stated, had been carried by his troops to the castle, in order to enjoy the triumph of the occasion.

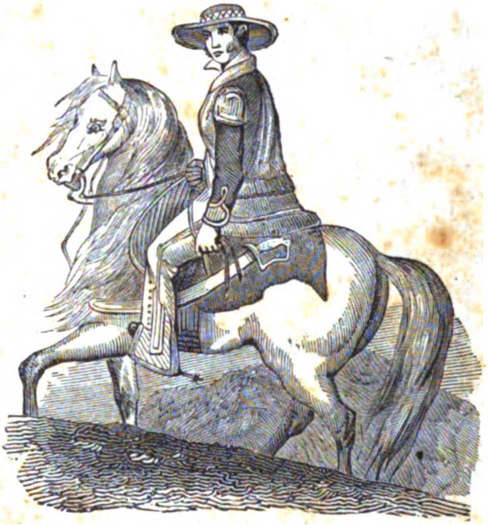
In speaking of this brilliant affair, General Pillow says:—"We took about eight hundred prisoners, among whom were Major-General Bravo, Brigadier-Generals Monterde, Monega, Doramentas, and Saldana; also, three colonels, seven lieutenant-colonels, forty captains, twenty-four first, and twenty-seven second lieutenants.

"That the enemy was in large force, I know, certainly, from personal observation. I know it also from the fact that there were killed and taken prisoners, one major-general, and six brigadiers. As there were six brigadier-generals, there could not have been less than six brigades. One thousand men to each brigade, (which is a low estimate, for we had previously taken so many general officers prisoners, that the commands of others must have been considerably increased,) would make six thousand troops. But independent of these evidences of the enemy's strength, I have General Bravo's own account of the strength of his command, given me only a few minutes after he was taken prisoner. He communicated to me, through Passed Midshipman Rogers, that there were upwards of six thousand men in the works and surrounding grounds. The killed, wounded, and prisoners, agreeably to the best estimate I can form, were about eighteen hundred, and immense numbers of the enemy were seen to escape over the wall on the north and west sides of Chapultepec."

Many of those who distinguished themselves in this assault have been given in connection with the narrative; a mere list of others mentioned with encomiums by the different commanders, would alone fill a moderate chapter. Where all behaved as did the victors of Chapultepec, it is indeed difficult to discriminate in the awarding of praise. The feat will remain in American history as a proud trophy to American valour; and the fact of being one of the participators in it, will insure to many a soldier the esteem and admiration of countrymen while he lives, and a grateful veneration of his memory after death.

While the assault was going on, on the west, and south-east of Chapultepec, and on its heights, two companies of infantry, under Colonel Ironsdale and Lieutenant Hebert, aided by Captain Magruder's field-battery, had some spirited skirmishes with different parties of the enemy. In one of these, officers and men behaved in a gallant manner, they drove the gunners from a battery in the road, and captured a piece. Colonel Ironsdale was twice wounded, but continued on duty until the heights were carried.





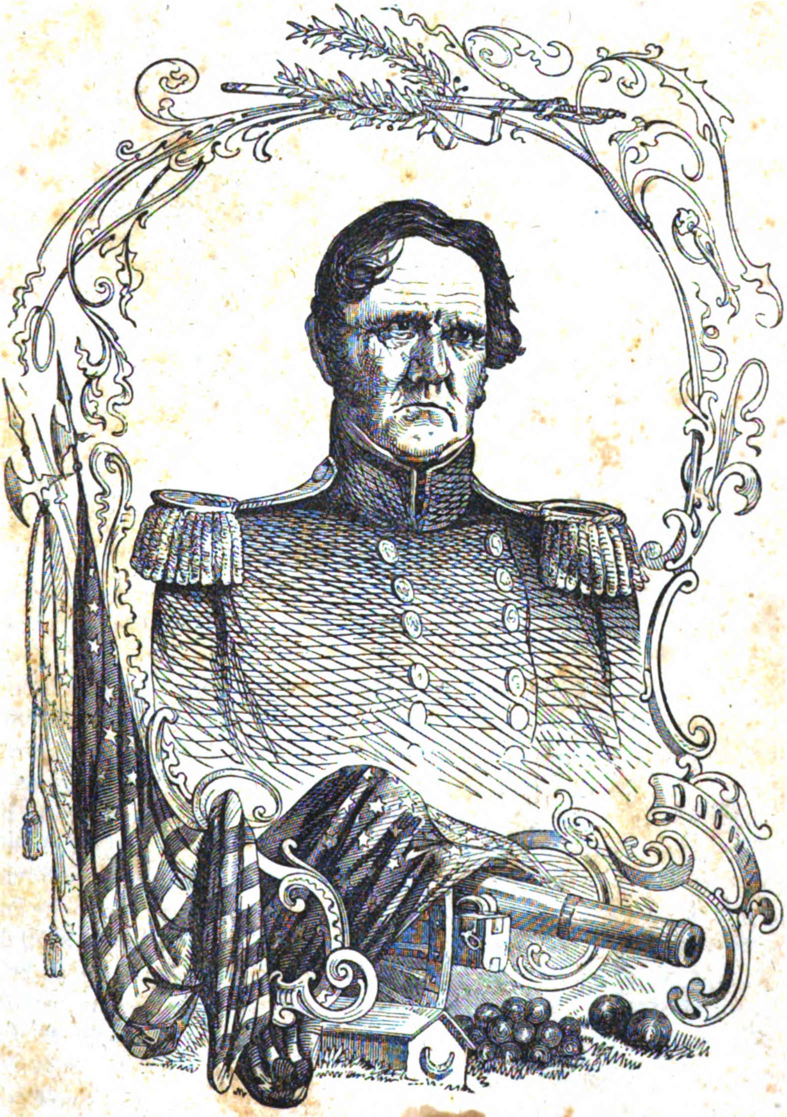
A Mexican Gentleman.

CHAPTER XXXI.

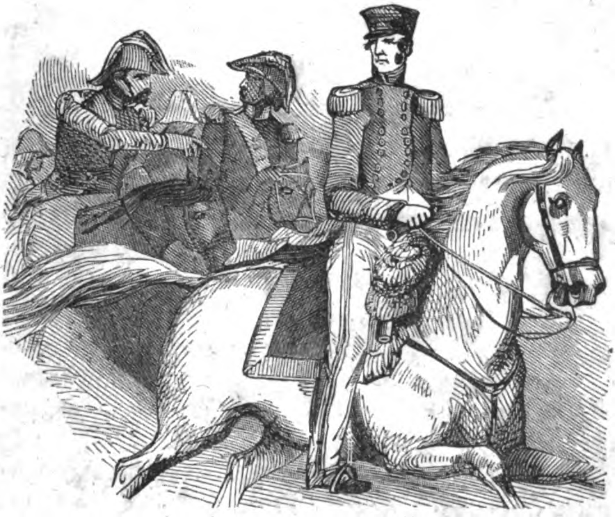
STORMING OF BELIN AND SAN COSME GATES.

THE capture of Chapultepec opened to the American army the direct road to the western and southern portions of the city, which points now became the objects of attack. Aware of the importance of improving upon the impression made upon the enemy by so heavy a loss, General Scott determined to waste no time, but to press on immediately to the decisive assault.

Two great routes lead from Chapultepec to the capital. That on the right enters the Belen with the Piedad road, from the south; the second obliquing to the left intersects the great western or San Cosme road, in a suburb outside the San Cosme gate. Each of these routes is an elevated causeway, having a double road on the sides of an aqueduct of strong masonry, of great height, and resting on open



Major-General Scott.



General Scott and Staff.

arches and massive pillars, affording fine points both for attack and defence. In addition to this, the sideways of both aqueducts were defended by many strong breastworks, both at the gates and before reaching them—the whole presenting a chain of breastworks every link of which would have to be broken before the city could be entered.

Immediately after the capture of Chapultepec, General Scott mounted to the top of the castle, where he was enabled to take a comprehensive view of the whole field of operations, and to control the complicated assault upon the capital. His first care was to despatch the brigades of Clarke and Cadwalader, together with some heavy guns, to Worth's support, and Pierce's brigade to Quitman's. Lieutenant-Colonel Howard—in the absence of Colonel Morgan, wounded at Chapultepec—with one company of infantry, was appointed to garrison Chapultepec, after receiving directions concerning the prisoners and captured stores. Having personally attended to the preliminary arrangements for executing these orders, the general-in-chief descended, and, with his staff, hurried forward to join General Worth, who was already advancing along the San Cosme route

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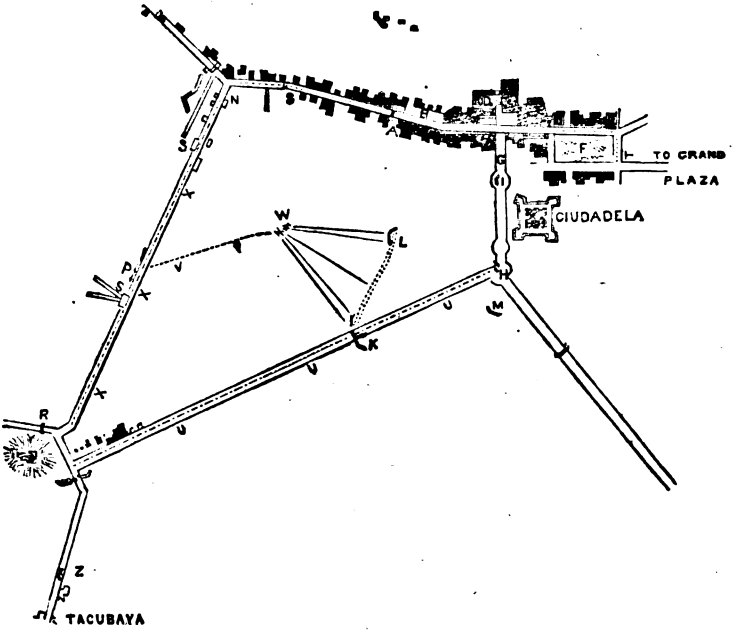
* The strength of the fortifications on this side of the city, where, it will be remembered, Santa Anna had not expected a serious attack, is a conclusive proof of the sagacity of that active leader. He had reason to boast, as he afterwards did, that Mexico had never beheld such defences as opposed the American army. If he failed of victory, it was owing to circumstances which it was impossible for him to foresee.

SKETCH OF THE ROUTES OF

GENERAL WORTH'S AND GENERAL QUITMAN'S COLUMNS FROM CHAPULTEPEC TO THE SAN COSME AND BELEN GATES.

In the attack upon the City of Mexico, 13th and 14th of September, 1847.



REFERENCES.

A. Garita of San Cosme.
B. Head-quarters of General Worth on the night of the 13th.
C. Position of Clarke's brigade on the night of the 13th.
D. Cuartel.
E. Cuartel of San Fernando.
F. Alameda.
G. Paseo.
H. Garita Belen.
I. Battery.
K. Battery.
L. Battery.
M. Battery.
N. Battery at Campo Santo.

2151 yards from N. to P.
1379 yards from P. to Chapultepec
R. Battery.
S. Battery.
T. Head of General Worth's column at six o'clock on the morning of 14th.
----- General Worth's division.
UUU. Road and aqueduct to Belen gate. General Quitman's route.
VV. Passage of Smith's light battalion.
W. Section of Duncan's battery.
XXX. Road and aqueduct to the garita. General Worth's route.
Y. Chapultepec.
Z. Drum's battery.

THE American commander had intended to make but one principal attack upon the city, which was to be conducted by Worth, against the San Cosme gate; while General Quitman, advancing along the Tacubaya road, was to threaten the Belen defences, and amuse the garrison, until Worth had effected a lodgment in the city.

It will be remembered that prior to the assault upon Chapultepec, Worth had been ordered to hold his division in readiness to support the operations of General Pillow. When the latter officer was wounded, he sent an aid to Worth, requesting him to bring up his "whole division, and make great haste or he feared he would be too late." This call seems to have been premature—not to say unnecessary—but Worth promptly despatched Clarke's brigade, who, mingling with the assailants, entered side by side into the fortress. Although thus weakened, the general put his remaining brigade (Colonel Garland's) in motion, along the north-eastern base of the hill, in direction of the San Cosme road. After advancing about four hundred yards, the troops reached the battery which had been assailed by Magruder's field-guns—particularly by the section under the gallant Lieutenant Jackson, who, although he had lost most of his horses, and many men, was still remaining firmly at his post. About the same time, a portion of Garland's brigade encountered and defeated the enemy's right, who had been for a long while hovering near the hill. Quitman's command was now plainly discernible, fighting their way along the Tacubaya aqueduct. After the repulse of the Mexican right, Worth's troops discovered an arched passage through the aqueduct, and a cross route practicable for artillery, extending a considerable distance over the meadows towards the enemy's left, which was now galling Quitman's advance. With a generosity which does him honour, Worth determined to assist his brother officer in so perilous an extremity, and despatched Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan, with a section of his battery, covered by Lieutenant-Colonel Smith's battalion, to attack the enemy's left, which was supported by a battery. Duncan advanced to within four hundred yards, and opened a fire which drove back both infantry and artillery. "Having thus aided," says Worth, "the advance, and cleared the front (being favourably situated) of my gallant friend, Quitman, so far as it was in my power, this portion of my command was withdrawn."

COLONEL CLARKE'S brigade at this moment rejoined the division, and the advance upon the main road was continued. The troops soon came up with a second battery, which was stormed and taken, a victory followed in a little while by the capture of a third. Both of these were strong works, enfilading the road. Their capture brought the division to the Campo Santo, or English burying ground, near which the road and aqueduct bend towards the city. Here Worth was joined by the general-in-chief. "At this junction of roads," says General Scott, "we first passed one of those formidable systems of city defences, spoken of above, and it had not a gun!—a strong proof, 1st. That the enemy had expected us to fail in the attack upon Chapultepec, even if we meant any thing but a feint; 2d. That in either case, we designed in his belief to return and double our forces against the southern gates, a delusion kept up by the active demonstrations of Twiggs and the forces posted on that side; and, 3d. That advancing rapidly from the reduction of Chapultepec, the enemy had not time to shift guns—our previous captures had left him comparatively but few—from the southern gates.

"Within those disgarnished works, I found our troops engaged in a street fight, against the enemy posted in gardens, at windows, and on house-tops—all flat, with parapets. Worth ordered forward the mountain howitzers, of Cadwalader's brigade, preceded by skirmishers and pioneers, with pickaxes and crowbars, to force windows and doors, or to burrow through walls."

The troops were now in front of another battery, beyond which, distant some two hundred and fifty yards, and sustaining it, was the last defence—the San Cosme gate. The approach to these works being in a right line, the entire space was swept by grape, shells, and canister, from a heavy gun and howitzer. To this were added the severe fires of musketry from churches, houses, and walls. The spectacle throughout the entire field was at this time awfully sublime. To the south, Twiggs was manœuvering and keeping in check the enemy's strongest batteries, thus preventing them from reinforcing the actual points of attack; from the Tacubaya road was heard the thunder of Quitman's cannon, as he hurried on his shouting troops, through the most appalling fires, to the strongest fortresses of Mexico; while in noble emulation, Worth, and his iron-nerved followers, poured along the western road, storming battery after battery and now facing the last stronghold. On the other hand, the Mexicans, gathering all their energies as the danger approached, sent forth volleys of flaming fire whose iron showers smote fearfully among the assailants, and made the lofty buildings of the capital totter with their reiterated reports. Every possible means of defence was thrown into the fortresses; and Santa Anna, abandoning to another general the protection of his strongest work, hurried to San Cosme to resist the threatened entrance of Worth.

On arriving in front of the last mentioned battery, General Worth found it necessary to vary his mode of operations. Garland's brigade was thrown within the aqueduct, to the right, with instructions to dislodge the enemy from the buildings in their front, and if possible to turn the left of the main defence. At the same time, Clarke's brigade entered the buildings on the left, and with bars and picks burrowed through the houses towards the enemy's right. This work, although slow and tedious, was greatly favoured by the fire of two mountain howitzers, posted one on the top of a building commanding the left, the other on the church of San Cosme to the right. At five o'clock, each column had reached its position near the main work, when it became necessary to advance a piece of artillery at all hazards, to the enemy's last battery, which was now evacuated. Lieutenant Hunt was intrusted with the execution of this important and dangerous duty, which he performed in the highest possible style of gallantry, moving in the face of the enemy's fire, at full speed, and planting his guns, muzzle to muzzle, with those of the opposing batteries. Out of nine men, one was killed and four wounded, although the distance moved over was only one hundred and fifty yards.

EVERY thing was now in readiness for the final attack of the two brigades upon the right and left of the San Cosme fortress. "It was made," says General Worth, "by our men springing as if by magic to the tops of the houses into which they had patiently and quietly made their way with the bar and pick, and to the utter surprise and consternation of the enemy, opening upon him within easy range, a destructive fire of musketry. A single discharge, in which many of his gunners were killed by their pieces, was sufficient to drive him in confusion from the breastworks, when a prolonged shout from our brave fellows announced that we were in possession of the garita of San Cosme, and already in the city of Mexico."

THE remainder of the division now entered the city gate. Captain Huger having reported to General Worth, was desired to advance a twenty-four-pounder and a ten inch mortar to a convenient position for opening upon the Grand Plaza and National Palace, supposed to be distant about sixteen hundred yards. At nine o'clock this battery opened with such admirable effect, that in four hours, Worth was waited upon by a flag from the municipality, the bearer of which stated, that immediately after the heavy guns had opened, the army and government commenced evacuating the city. The deputation was passed to the head-quarters of General Scott, under charge of Assistant Adjutant-General Mackall; and the active operations near San Cosme were of course suspended. Worth's loss was two officers killed, ten wounded, with one hundred and twenty-nine, rank and file, killed, wounded, and missing.

During these brilliant operations of General Worth, others no less glorious were being conducted by Quitman and his gallant troops, in the Tacubaya road. Immediately after the fall of Chapultepec, he had observed large bodies of the enemy at the batteries in this route, and providing himself with ammunition, he prepared to march upon them. The rifle regiment, led by General Smith, formed under the arches of the aqueduct, and as the remainder of his brigade came up, that officer employed them in levelling the parapets and filling the ditches, which interrupted the road where the enemy's batteries had been. A path was thus cleared for the passage of the heavy artillery ordered up by the general-in-chief, after his arrival at Chapultepec. At the same time, General Shields, with the assistance of General Quitman's staff officers and his own, was causing the deficient ammunition to be supplied, and the troops to be formed for the advance, while Captain Drum, supported by the rifle regiment, had taken charge of one of the enemy's pieces, and was advancing towards the first battery occupied by the enemy towards the city.

It will be remembered that the Tacubaya, or Chapultepec, is a broad avenue, flanked on either side by deep ditches and marshy grounds. Along its middle runs the aqueduct, supported by arches of heavy masonry, extending onward through the gate (*garita*) of

Belen into the city. Along these arches the rifles, supported by the South Carolina regiment, and followed by the remainder of Smith's brigade, were now advancing. In their front, and directly across the road, was a strong battery, having four embrasures, with a redan work on the right. Here the enemy made an obstinate resistance; but by the aid of an eight inch howitzer, conducted by Captain Drum, and the daring bravery of the rifle regiment, it was carried by storm. Here the column was reorganized, for an attack upon the batteries at the main defence. In advance were the riflemen, intermingled with the bayonets of the South Carolina regiment—three rifles and three bayonets being under each arch. These were supported by the remainder of Shields's brigade, the 2d Pennsylvania regiment, the remnant of Smith's command, and part of the 6th infantry, under Major Bonneville. In this order the column moved from arch to arch, under a tremendous fire of artillery and small arms from the Belen and Paseo batteries, and a large body of the enemy on the Piedad road. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Benjamin had brought up a sixteen-pounder, which added to Captain Drum's piece, poured into the fortifications a constant and destructive fire. The enfilading fire from the Piedad road becoming very annoying, a few rounds of canister were thrown among them with good effect. The whole column was now under a galling fire, but steadily and firmly it continued to move forward until the advance was near enough for the charge. This was executed in a brilliant manner, and at twentyminutes past one, the Belen gate was carried, and the city entered at that point.

IN speaking of this affair, and of the subsequent operations under his direction, General Quitman says:—"The obstinacy of the defence at the garita may be accounted for by our being opposed at that point by General Santa Anna in person, who is said to have retreated by the Paseo to the San Cosme road, there to try his fortune against General Worth.

"On our approach to the garita, a body of the enemy, who were seen on a cross road threatening our left, were dispersed by a brisk fire of artillery from the direction of the San Cosme road. I take pleasure in acknowledging that this seasonable aid came from Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan's battery, which had been kindly advanced from the San Cosme road, in that direction, by General Worth's orders.

UPON the taking of the garita, the riflemen and South Carolina regiment rushed forward and occupied the arches of the aqueduct, within a hundred yards of the citadel. The ammunition of our heavy guns having been expended, a captured eight-pounder was turned upon the enemy and served with good effect until the ammunition taken with it was also expended. The piece, supported by our advance, had been run forward in front of the garita. Twice had Major Gladden, of the South Carolina regiment, furnished additional men to work the gun, when the noble and brave Captain Drum, who, with indomitable energy and iron nerve, had directed the artillery throughout this trying day, fell mortally wounded by the side of his gun. A few moments afterwards, Lieutenant Benjamin, who had displayed the same cool, decided courage, met a similar fate.

"The enemy, now perceiving that our heavy ammunition had been expended, redoubled their exertions to drive us out of the lodgment we had effected. A terrific fire of artillery and small arms was opened from the citadel, three hundred yards distant, from the batteries on the Paseo, and the buildings on our right in front. Amid this iron shower, which swept the road on both sides of the aqueduct, it was impossible to bring forward ammunition for our large guns. While awaiting the darkness to bring up our great guns and place them in battery, the enemy, under cover of their guns, attempted several sallies from the citadel and buildings on the right, but were readily repulsed by the skirmishing parties of rifles and infantry. To prevent our flank from being enfiladed by musketry from the Paseo, Captains Naylor and Loeser, 2d Pennsylvania regiment, were ordered with their companies to a low sand-bag defence about a hundred yards in that direction. They gallantly took this position, and held it, in the face of a severe fire, until the object was attained.

"At night the fire of the enemy ceased. Lieutenant Tower, of the engineers, who before and at the attack upon the batteries at Chapultepec had given important aid, had been seriously wounded. It was, therefore, fortunate that, in the commencement of the route to the city, Lieutenant Beauregard, of engineers, joined me. I was enabled, during the day, to avail myself of his valuable services; and although disabled, for a time, by a wound received during the day, he superintended, during the whole night, the erection of two batteries within the garita for our heavy guns, and a breastwork on our right for infantry, which, with his advice, I had determined to construct. By the indefatigable energy of my acting assistant adjutant-general, Lieutenant Lovell, my volunteer aid, Captain G. T. M. Davis, and Lieutenant H. Brown, 3d artillery, the sand-bags and ammunition were procured; Lieutenant Beauregard, assisted by Lieutenant Coupe, directing the construction of one battery in person, and Lieutenant W. H. Wood, 3d infantry, the other. Before the dawn of day, by the persevering exertions of Captains Fairchild and Taylor, of the New York regiments, who directed the working parties, the parapets were completed, and a twenty-four pounder, an eighteen-pounder, and an eight-inch howitzer placed in battery by Captain Steptoe, 3d artillery, who, to my great satisfaction, had rejoined my command in the evening. The heavy labour required to construct these formidable batteries, under the very guns of the citadel, was performed with the utmost cheerfulness by the gallant men whose strong arms and stout hearts had already been tested in two days of peril and toil.

DURING the night, while at the trenches, Brigadier-General Pierce—one of whose regiments (the 9th infantry) had joined my column during the day—reported to me in person. He was instructed to place that regiment in reserve at the battery in rear, for the protection of Steptoe's light battery, and the ammunition at that point. The general has my thanks for his prompt attention to these orders.

"At dawn of day on the 14th, when Captain Steptoe was preparing his heavy missiles, a white flag came from the citadel, the bearers of which invited me to take possession of this fortress, and gave me the intelligence that the city had been abandoned by Santa Anna and his army. My whole command was immediately ordered under arms. By their own request, Lieutenants Lovell and Beauregard were authorized to go to the citadel, in advance, to ascertain the truth of the information. At a signal from the ramparts, the column, General Smith's brigade in front, and the South Carolina regiment left in garrison at the garita, marched into the citadel. Having taken possession of this work, in which we found fifteen pieces of cannon mounted, and as many not up, with the extensive military armaments which it contained, the 2d Pennsylvania regiment was left to garrison it. Understanding that great depredations were going on in the palace and public buildings, I moved the column in that direction in the same order, followed by Captain Steptoe's light battery, through the principal streets into the great plaza, where it was formed in front of the National Palace. Captain Roberts, of the rifle regiment, who had led the advance company of the storming party at Chapultepec, and had greatly distinguished himself during the preceding day, was detailed by me to plant the star-spangled banner of our country upon the National Palace. The flag, the first strange banner which had ever waved over that palace since the conquest of Cortes, was displayed and saluted with enthusiasm by the whole command. The palace, already crowded with Mexican thieves and robbers, was placed in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel Watson, with his battalion of marines. By his active exertions, it was soon cleared and guarded from further spoliation.

"Two detachments from my command, not heretofore mentioned in this report, should be noticed. Captain Gallagher and Lieutenant Reid, who, with their companies of New York volunteers, had been detailed on the morning of the 12th, by General Shields to the support of our battery No. 2, well performed this service. The former, by the orders of Captain Huger, was detained at that battery during the storming of Chapultepec. The latter, a brave and energetic young officer, being relieved from the battery on the advance to the castle, hastened to the assault, and was among the first to ascend the crest of the hill where he was severely wounded.

IN all the operations of the several corps under my command, to which this report refers, it gives me great pleasure to testify to the devoted courage with which they faced every danger, and the cheerfulness and alacrity with which they met every toil and exposure. A simple narrative of those military events, crowned as they were with complete success, is a higher compliment than any expressions of my opinion can bestow upon the general good conduct of the whole command.

"I have already alluded to the gallant conduct of the storming parties. They deserve the highest commendation. The losses sustained by Captain Drum's heroic little band of artillerists from the 4th artillery, evince their exposure during the day. I do them, officers and men, but justice, when I add that no encomium upon their conduct and skill would be misplaced.

THIS report has already shown the prominent part taken by the regiment of riflemen under the command of the brave and intrepid Major Loring, who fell severely wounded by my side, while receiving orders for the final charge upon the garita. After the taking of the batteries of Chapultepec, in which portions of this corps took an active part, this efficient and splendid regiment were employed as sharp-shooters in the advance, through the arches of the aqueduct, where their services were invaluable. My only concern was to restrain their daring impetuosity.

"The gallant and unassuming Palmetto regiment, which had charged up the ascent of Chapultepec without firing a gun, was also employed to support and aid the rifles. In this service their loss was severe. Among others, the brave and efficient commander, Major Gladden, was severely wounded, and Lieutenants J. B. Moraigne and William Canty, killed. But they well sustained the reputation they had acquired at Vera Cruz, Contreras, and Churubusco.

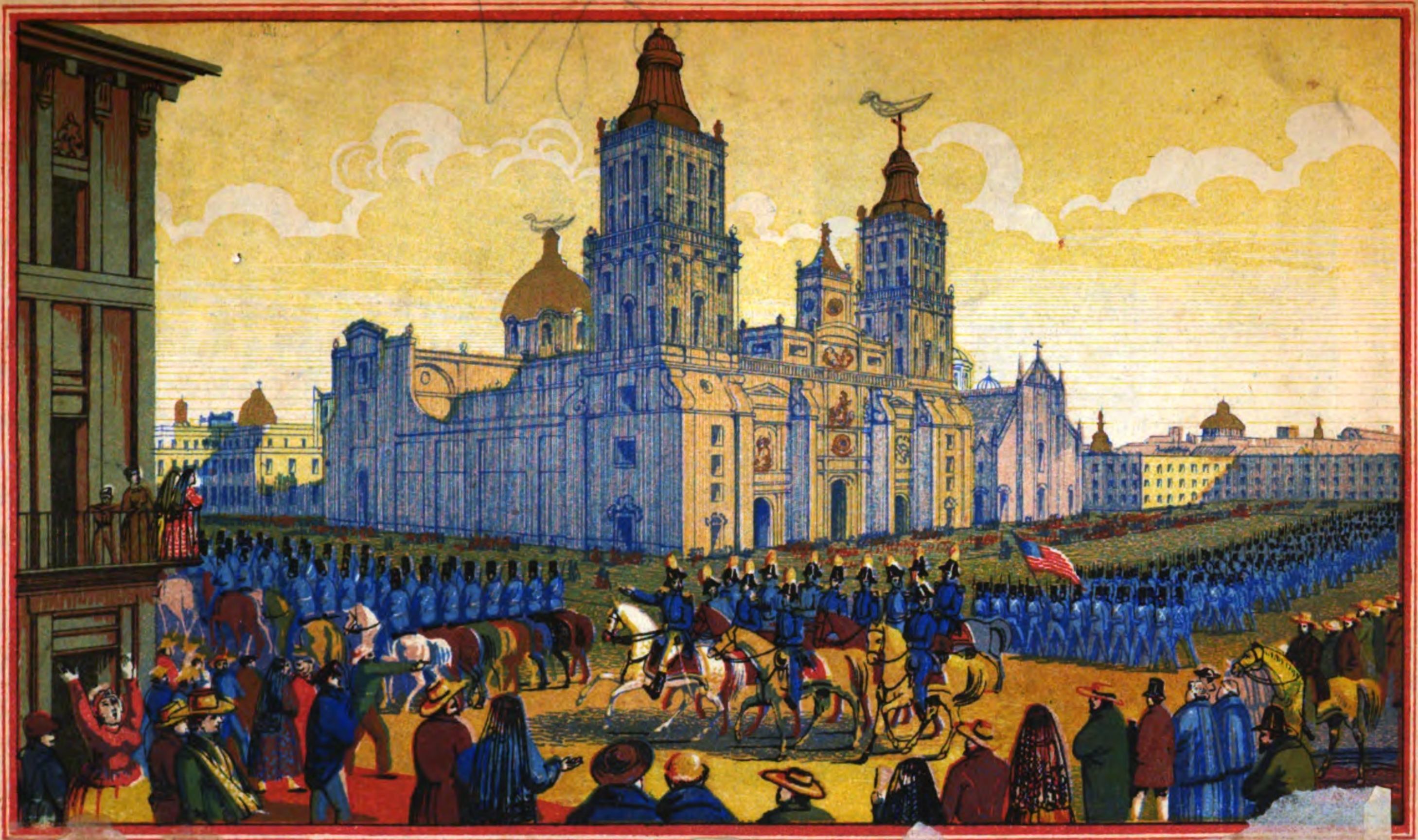
"Brigadier-General Shields had solicited from me the command of the storming parties in the morning of the 13th. Not feeling justified in permitting so great an exposure of an officer of his rank with an inadequate command, and requiring his invaluable services with his brigade, the application was declined. Until carried from the field on the night of the 13th, in consequence of the severe wound received in the morning, he was conspicuous for his gallantry, energy, and skill. In Brevet Brigadier-General Smith, who was ever cool, unembarrassed, and ready, under the trying exposures of the day, I found an able and most efficient supporter. Lieutenant-Colonel Geary, who, in the illness of Colonel Roberts, commanded the 2d Pennsylvania regiment, constituting the 2d brigade of my division, was wounded before the walls of Chapultepec, at the head of his corps, but soon resumed command and rendered good service."

General Quitman's loss on this day was five hundred and forty men, of whom seventy-seven, including eight officers, were killed, four hundred and fifty-four wounded, and nine missing.

It will be borne in mind, that the storming of Belen gate had not been part of General Scott's plan of attack. The main assault was conducted by General Worth, and during the afternoon, the commander had repeatedly informed Quitman of his original design.

But that gallant officer continued to press forward with increased success, and a laudable spirit which the general-in-chief would not dampen, by an order for his recall. The consequence was that the whole line of defence on the western side was carried on the same afternoon, rendering the defeat of the enemy utterly overwhelming.

It should also be borne in mind, that during a great part of the assault, Quitman was opposed by Santa Anna in person, who left no means untried in order to avail himself of his powerful defences, and prevent the entrance of the Americans. Even the batteries of El Paseo and Piedad were made to sweep the causeway, along which the troops were passing; so that in view of all the circumstances attending this trying assault, the sentiment will not appear extravagant, which compared Quitman's advance towards the Belen gate, to Napoleon's passage of the Lodi. The immediate consequence was the capture of the capital, so long the goal of the army's ambition.



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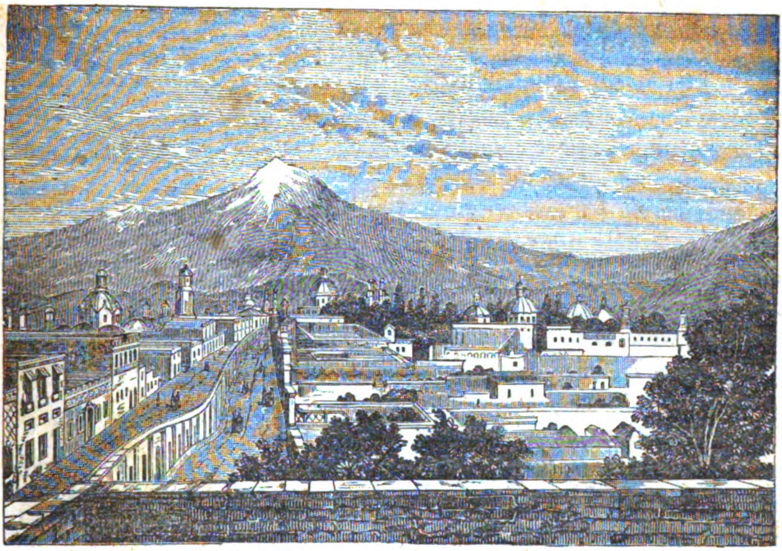
ENTRANCE OF THE ARMY INTO THE CITY OF MEXICO.



City of Mexico. Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl in the distance.

the grand plaza, planted guards, and hoisted, on the National Palace, the colours of the United States. "In this grateful service," observes the commander, "Quitman might have been anticipated by Worth, but for my express orders halting the latter at the head of the *alameda*, (a green park,) within three squares of that goal of general ambition. The capital, however, was not taken by any one or two corps, but by the talent, the science, the gallantry, the prowess of this entire army. In the glorious conquest *all* had contributed—early and powerfully—the killed, the wounded, and *the fit for duty*—at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, San Antonio, Churubusco, (three battles,) the Molinos del Rey, and Chapultepec—as much as those who fought at the gates of Belen and San Cosme."

The advance divisions were followed by the remainder of the army, under the personal direction of Major-General Scott. The officers were dressed in full uniform, the military bands sent forth strains of national music, and altogether, the entrance was conducted in a manner highly gratifying to the soldiers.

Immediately after entering, the troops were fired upon from the roofs of houses, windows, and corners of the streets, by about two thousand convicts liberated by the flying government, and assisted by as many Mexican soldiers, who had disbanded themselves and thrown off their uniforms. Worth and Quitman's divisions had previously suffered from the same source. In spite of the exertions of the municipal authorities, this unlawful war was not stopped until the Americans had lost many men, including Colonel Garland wounded, and Lieutenant Sidney Smith, killed. The object of this assassin-like fire was to gratify national hatred, and amid the general confusion, to plunder the deserted houses and wealthy inhabitants. The most active operations were conducted against them, which were at length successful, and quiet was restored.

Immediately on assuming quarters, General Scott issued a proclamation, enforcing rules of order to be observed by the American army, and calling on the troops to return public thanks to Almighty God, for the late important conquests. Under his admirable arrangements, together with those of Governor Quitman, the citizens returned to their homes, business slowly revived, and the city resumed its wonted appearance of beauty and cheerfulness.

The operations in the valley of Mexico are so stupendous, that we give General Scott's summary of them, together with the killed, wounded, and prisoners, on each side, in order that they may at once be embraced in a single view.

"Leaving, as we all feared," says the general-in-chief, "inadequate garrisons at Vera Cruz, Perote, and Puebla—with much larger hospitals; and being obliged, most reluctantly, from the same cause (general paucity of numbers) to abandon Jalapa, we marched [August 7–10] from Puebla with only ten thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight rank and file. This number includes the garrison of Jalapa, and the two thousand four hundred and twenty-nine men brought up by Brigadier-General Pierce, August 6th.

"At Contreras, Churubusco, &c., [August 20,] we had but eight thousand four hundred and ninety-seven men engaged—after deducting the garrison of San Augustin, (our general depot,) the intermediate sick and the dead; at the Molinos del Rey, [September 8,] but three brigades, with some cavalry and artillery—making in all three thousand two hundred and fifty-one men—were in the battle; in the two days—September 12 and 13—our whole operating force, after deducting again, the recent killed, wounded, and sick, together with the garrison of Mixcoac (the then general depot) and that of Tacubaya, was but seven thousand one hundred and eighty; and, finally, after deducting the new garrison at Chapultepec, with the killed and wounded of the two days, we took possession [September 14] of this great capital with less than six thousand men! And I reassert, upon accummulated and unquestionable evidence, that, in not one of those conflicts, was this army opposed by fewer than three and a half times its numbers—in several of them, by a yet greater excess.

"I recapitulate our losses since we arrived in the basin of Mexico:

"August 19, 20. Killed, one hundred and thirty-seven, including fourteen officers. Wounded, eight hundred and seventy-seven, including sixty-two officers. Missing, (probably killed) thirty-eight rank and file. Total, one thousand and fifty-two.

"September 8.—Killed, one hundred and sixteen, including nine officers. Wounded, six hundred and sixty-five, including forty-nine officers. Missing, eighteen rank and file. Total, seven hundred and eighty-nine.

1052
789
862
703

"September 12, 13, 14.—Killed, one hundred and thirty, including ten officers. Wounded, seven hundred and three, including sixty-eight officers. Missing, twenty-nine rank and file. Total, eight hundred and sixty-two.

"Grand total of losses, two thousand seven hundred and three, including three hundred and eighty-three officers.

"On the other hand, this small force has beaten, on the same occasions, in view of their capital, the whole Mexican army, of (at the beginning) thirty odd thousand men—posted, always, in chosen positions, behind intrenchments, or more formidable defences of nature and art; killed or wounded, of that number, more than seven thousand officers and men; taken three thousand seven hundred and thirty prisoners, one-seventh officers, including thirteen generals, of whom three had been presidents of this republic; captured more than twenty colours and standards, seventy-five pieces of ordnance, besides fifty-seven wall-pieces, twenty thousand small arms, an immense quantity of shot, shells, powder, &c., &c.

"OF that enemy, once so formidable in numbers, appointments, artillery, &c., twenty odd thousand men have disbanded themselves in despair, leaving, as is known, not more than three fragments—the largest about two thousand five hundred—now wandering in different directions, without magazines or a military chest, and living *at free quarters* upon their own people.

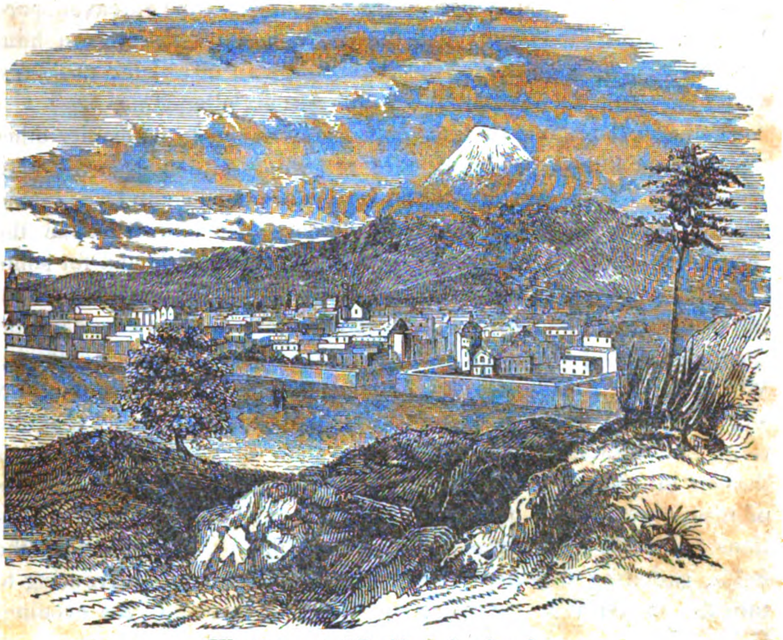
"General Santa Anna, himself a fugitive, is believed to be on the point of resigning the chief magistracy, and escaping to neutral Guatimala. A new president, no doubt, will soon be declared, and the federal congress is expected to reassemble at Queretaro, one hundred and twenty-five miles north of this, on the Zacatecas road, some time in October. I have seen and given safe conduct through this city to several of its members. The government will find itself without resources; no army, no arsenals, no magazines, and but little revenue, internal or external. Still such is the obstinacy, or rather infatuation, of this people, that it is very doubtful whether the new authorities will dare sue for peace on the terms which, in the recent negotiations, were made known by our minister.

* * * * * * * * *

"In conclusion, I beg to enumerate, once more, with due commendation and thanks, the distinguished staff officers, general and personal, who, in our last operations in front of the enemy, accompanied me, and communicated orders to every point and through every danger. Lieutenant-Colonel Hitchcock, acting inspector-general; Major Turnbull and Lieutenant Hardcastle, topographical engineers; Major Kirby, chief paymaster; Captain Irwin, chief quartermaster; Captain Grayson, chief commissary; Captain H. L. Scott, chief in the adjutant-general's department; Lieutenant Williams, aid-de-camp; Lieutenant Lay, military secretary, and Major J. P. Gaines, Kentucky cavalry, volunteer aid-de-camp. Captain Lee, engineer, so constantly distinguished, also bore important orders from me (September 13) until he fainted from a wound and the loss of two nights' sleep at the batteries. Lieutenants Beauregard, Stevens, and Tower, all wounded, were employed with the divisions, and Lieutenants G. W. Smith and G. B. McClellan with the company of sappers and miners. Those five lieutenants of engineers, like their captain, won the admiration of all about them. The ordnance officers, Captain Huger, Lieutenants Hagner, Stone, and Reno, were highly effective, and distinguished at the several batteries; and I must add that Captain McKinstrey, assistant quartermaster, at the close of the operations, executed several important commissions for me as a special volunteer.

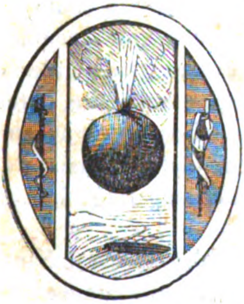
"Surgeon-General Lawson, and the medical staff generally, were skilful and untiring in and out of fire, in administering to the numerous wounded."

Comment upon the achievements described in this extract is unnecessary. The immediate result, as has been already stated, was the undisputed possession of the most splendid capital of the American continent; the remote result, the restoration of peace, and cession of an immense tract of territory to the United States.


Western part of Puebla de los Angeles.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SIEGE OF PUEBLA.

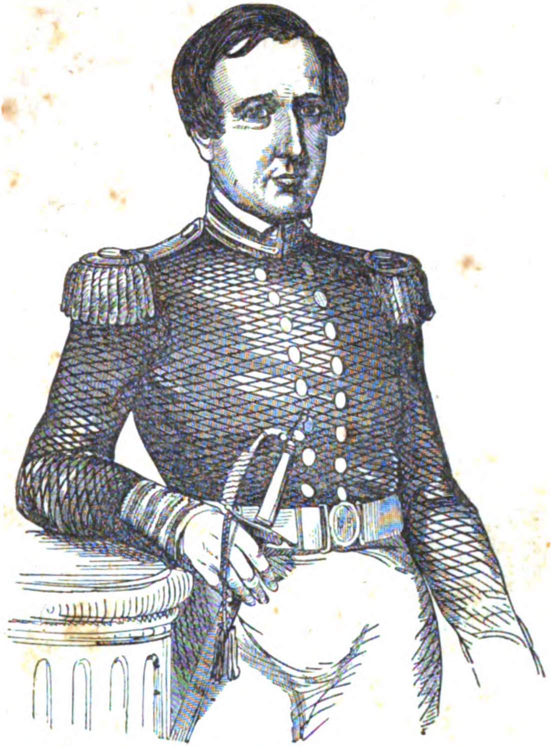

IN the march of the American army from Puebla towards the capital, the command of that city was intrusted to Colonel Childs. His total force was about four hundred men, consisting of forty-six cavalry, under Captain Ford, two companies of artillery, under Captains Kendrick and Miller, and six companies of the 1st Pennsylvania volunteers, under Lieutenant-Colonel Black. With this small command, the grand depot in the city named San Jose, and the posts of Loreto and Guadalupe, were to be garrisoned and held against the combined efforts of the military and populace in Puebla. San Jose was the key of the colonel's position, on the safety of which that of every other depended.

In addition to the smallness of the garrison, and the extent of space to be covered, the Americans were encumbered with eighteen hundred sick. The hospitals for these were situated in isolated positions, while the surgeons were provided with but six attendants.

After the departure of the main army, no acts of hostility other than the occasional murdering of a straggling soldier, occurred until September 13, the same day in which the Mexican capital was taken. During the night of that date, the enemy opened a fire upon the Americans from the streets of Puebla. Colonel Childs had for some time been expecting this, and had removed all the hospitals within the protection of San Jose, and placed every man of his command on duty. The firing of the 13th continued languidly until after daylight, when every thing became quiet. On the night of the 14th, the guns were reopened with a violence which convinced the colonel that the siege had commenced in earnest. A storm of bombs and shot was thrown into the fortifications until morning, while numerous bodies of troops were heard taking up positions around the American stations. On the 15th, large parties of cavalry were observed in the fields, gathering together the sheep and cattle, and endeavouring to turn the stream of water which supplies San Jose. In the evening, Colonel Childs organized two parties to secure, if possible, some of the live stock. They succeeded in capturing thirty oxen and four hundred sheep—a most seasonable supply at the time.

DURING the day, the fire of the enemy was unabated, and large reinforcements were observed to join them from the interior. Nearly every station in the city from which a battery could be discharged, was now occupied by the Mexicans, and under a most tremendous fire, the Americans laboured night and day in completing their defences, and preparing for an assault.

On the 22d, General Santa Anna arrived with a large force from Mexico. His appearance was hailed by discharges of cannon, a general ringing of bells, and other demonstrations of joy. A battery at Loreto was opened by command of Colonel Childs, which, throwing shells and round shot into the heart of the city, did considerable execution, besides causing a temporary suspension of the rejoicing. Santa Anna, with his customary

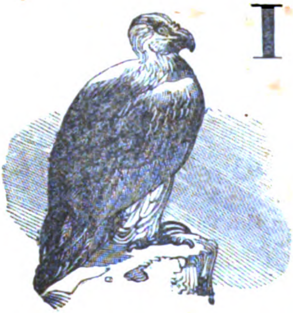


Colonel Childs.

activity, immediately began preparations for an assault. New batteries were planted, storming parties designated, and a more perfect organization of the besiegers enforced.

On the 25th, Childs received a summons to surrender, with the assurance that he would be treated in a manner worthy of his valour and military rank. This was declined. After despatching his answer, the colonel rode to the different posts of his garrison, announcing the demand, together with the reply. This was received by the soldiers in a manner which convinced him of their determination to endure every hardship and danger rather than disgrace themselves by yielding to the Mexican forces.

After receiving this answer from the American commander, Santa Anna opened his batteries upon San Jose, which now became the principal point of attack. Its garrison consisted of Ford's cavalry, Miller's artillery, four companies of volunteers, and a hospital, with its guard, under Captain Rowe. The whole was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Black. "The duty required of this command," says Colonel Childs, "in consequence of the various points to be defended, demanded an untiring effort on the part of every officer and soldier. A shower of bullets was constantly poured from the streets, the balconies, the house-tops, and churches, upon their devoted heads. Never did troops endure more fatigue, by watching night after night—nor exhibit more patience, spirit, and gallantry. Not a post of danger could present itself, but the gallant fellows were ready to fill it. Not a sentinel could be shot, but another was anxious and ready to take his place. Officers and soldiers vied with each other to be honoured martyrs in their country's cause. This is the general character of the troops I had the honour to command, and I was confident the crown of victory would perch upon their standard when the last great effort should be made."



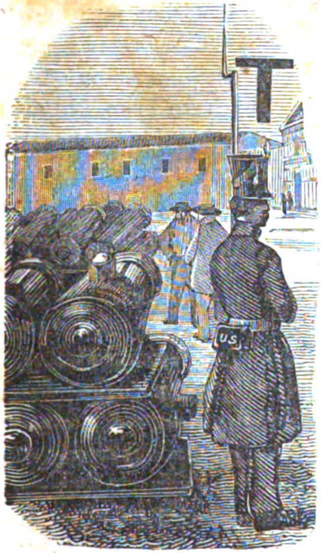
IN order, as far as possible, to secure San Jose from the enemy's shot, Childs threw up a traverse on the plaza, and withdrew a twelve-pounder from Loreto, to answer the besieging batteries. On the evening of the 30th, a new battery of Santa Anna ceased, and on the following morning was withdrawn, together with about three thousand of the supporting force. The object of this movement was to meet some reinforcements daily expected at Pinal. Taking advantage of it, Colonel Childs determined on a sortie against certain barricades and buildings, whose fire had become very annoying.

The sortie was made on the 2d of October, by two parties commanded by Captain Wm. F. Small, of the 1st Pennsylvania volunteers, and Lieutenant Morgan, of the 14th regiment. The captain, after passing through the walls of an entire square, with fifty men, gained a position opposite the barricade, from which he drove the enemy with great loss, and burned one hundred and fifty cotton bales, of which the work was composed. Seventeen Mexicans were killed upon the spot. Lieutenant Laidley, of the ordnance corps, was then sent to blow up a prominent building, which he successfully accomplished. The whole party were then withdrawn. In this affair they had behaved with great gallantry, and for twenty-four hours were unceasing in their labours to accomplish their object. Their loss was but a few wounded.

At the same time, Lieutenants Morgan and Merryfield, with detachments from the marines and rifles, attempted to gain possession of some buildings from which the depot was receiving a heavy fire.

The latter officer succeeded in entering; but Lieutenant Morgan was not so fortunate. After several desperate efforts to force a passage through the strong detachment opposed to him, he was directed by Colonel Childs to fall back. These gallant feats were a severe check upon the enemy, and produced a sensible diminution of their fire. Other minor acts of bravery were performed by officers and men at San Jose; while from Guadalupe one or two successful sorties were made upon the enemy while engaged in their daily attacks upon San Jose.

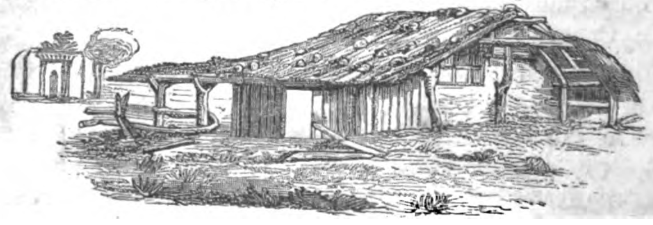
Immediately after this disaster, Santa Anna left the besieging forces, and hurried to oppose the march of General Lane from Vera Cruz. The bombardment and cannonade continued, however, with diminished energy, until October 12, when General Lane arrived with reinforcements for the wearied garrison.

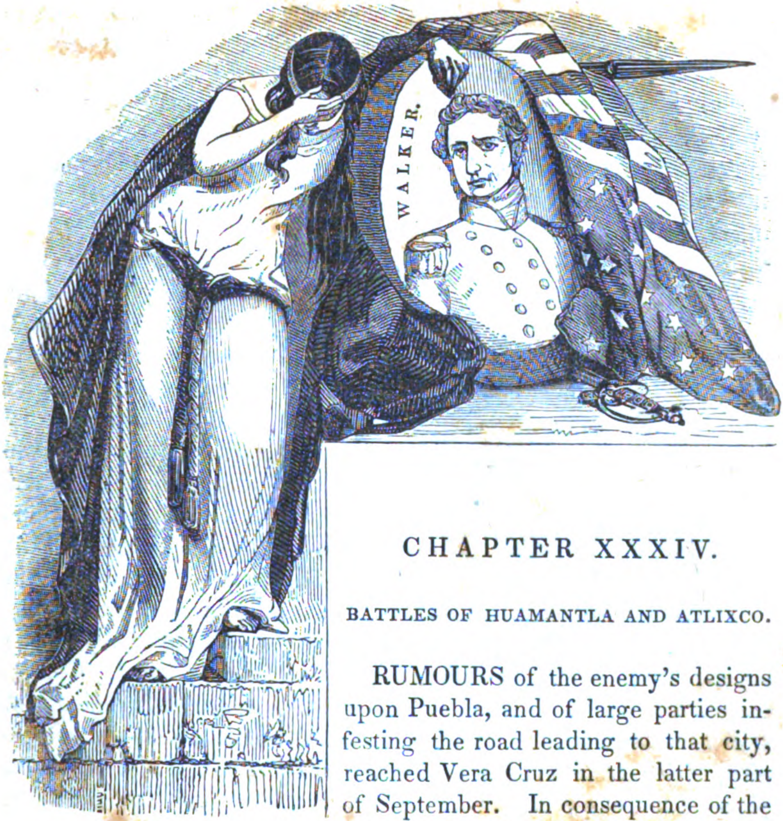


THROUGHOUT the whole of this trying siege. Colonel Childs behaved in a manner which proved him worthy of the confidence of the general-in-chief. He pays merited compliments to the officers and men. Besides those whose actions have been particularized, Lieutenant-Colonel Black afforded most able support, and for more than thirty days was untiring in his efforts for the preservation of his post. Lieutenant Laidley stationed himself at the barricade, night after night, firing upon the enemy with great effect from a twelve-pounder, a mountain howitzer, and four rocket batteries. Similar duties were performed by Captains Kendrick and Miller. Captain T. G. Morehead, 1st Pennsylvania volunteers, commanding at Guadalupe, succeeded, by constant labour, in placing the dilapidated works of that place in good condition; and although he sustained no serious attack, yet by frequent sorties, he was of great assistance to the garrison at San Jose. The colonel thus speaks of other officers:

"To Captain Rowe, of the 9th infantry, who commanded the guard of one of the hospitals, (a constant point of attack both day and night,) I am greatly indebted for his able defence of that position, and his gallant bearing before the enemy. To Sergeant Mills, chief of the medical department, and to his assistants, great praise is due for their unwearied and laborious services. Left with eighteen hundred sick and limited supplies, with but six assistants, their utmost exertions were necessary to administer timely remedies to so many patients. Their attention to the wounded deserves my notice and thanks. These gentlemen were not only occupied in their professional duties, but the want of officers and men compelled me to make large requisitions for the defence of the hospitals, on surgeons and invalids, and they were nightly on guard, marshaling their men upon the roofs and other points. I should be unjust to myself, and to the spy company under Captain Pedro Arria, if I did not call the attention of the general-in-chief to their invaluable services. From them I received the most accurate information of the movements of the enemy, and the designs of the citizens; through them I was enabled to apprehend several officers and citizens in their nightly meetings to consummate their plans for raising the populace. The spy company fought gallantly, and are now so compromised that they must leave the country when our army retires. The gallant charge of Lieutenant Waelder upon the enemy, although rash, exhibits him as an officer not to be intimidated by numbers. His duties have been arduous and dangerous, having daily to carry orders through the thickest of the fight. To Mr. Wengierski, secretary and translator, I am much indebted for invaluable services. In addition to his appropriate duties, he conducted the operations of the spy company, and through his suggestions and active exertions I received much valuable information, and many successful expeditions of spies into the city were made. Mr. Wengierski commanded the detachment on the roof of my quarters, and was the first man wounded. From his after efforts, his wound proved severe and painful; still he performed his various duties night and day, and is worthy of my approbation."

The siege of Puebla lasted forty days, and was the longest single military operation of the war. When we remember that it was sustained by some four hundred troops, encumbered by sick, and deficient in supplies, against an army of eight thousand, [Santa Anna's statements,] the result will appear astonishing. On the same day that it commenced, six thousand men, countrymen of the garrison, stormed almost impregnable bulwarks, defended by thirty thousand men, and entered triumphantly into the capital of Mexico!



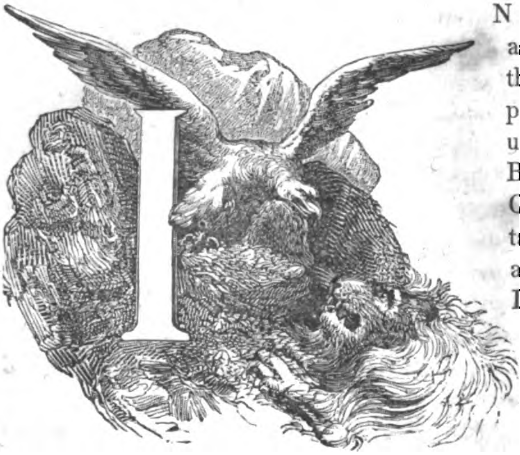


CHAPTER XXXIV.

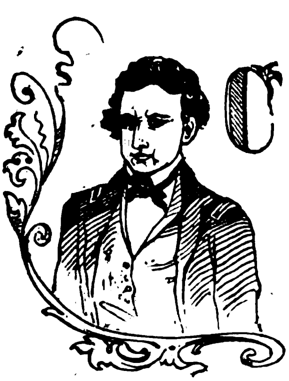
BATTLES OF HUAMANTLA AND ATLIXCO.

RUMOURS of the enemy's designs upon Puebla, and of large parties infesting the road leading to that city, reached Vera Cruz in the latter part of September. In consequence of the information, General Lane left the latter place with a considerable force, and marched for the interior. He was not long without sight of an enemy. At the hacienda of Santa Anna, near the San Juan river, he came up with a party of guerrillas. Captain Lewis's company of mounted volunteers was sent in pursuit, and a portion under Lieutenant Lilly succeeded in overtaking them. A short skirmish ensued, in which the lieutenant behaved with great bravery, and finally drove the Mexicans from their position. After this slight interruption, the whole command proceeded until it reached the Paso de Ovejas, where the rear guard was fired upon by a small guerrilla force, and Lieutenant Cline, an efficient young officer, killed.

This march was unusually fatiguing to the troops, on account of the heat of the weather, and nature of the road. Occasionally but a part of the general's force could move forward; and frequently the artillery was greatly delayed amid ravines, passes, and other natural obstructions. Meanwhile rumours continued to multiply, concerning a large Mexican force concentrating between Perote and Puebla. On arriving at the former place, General Lane received confirmation of these reports, with the additional information that they numbered four thousand men, with six pieces of artillery, and were commanded by Santa Anna in person. At the hacienda of San Antonio Tamaris, he learned from his spies that the enemy were then at Huamantla, a city but a few miles off. He promptly determined to march there, and if possible, give their army battle.



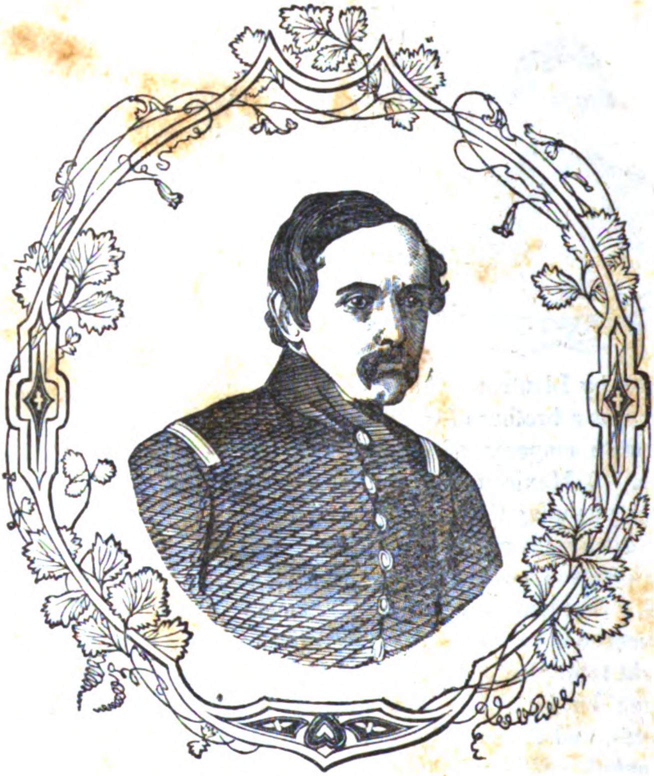
In order to execute this as speedily as possible the general left his train packed at Tamaris's, under charge of Colonel Brough's regiment of Ohio volunteers, Captain Simmon's battalion, and a battery under Lieutenant Pratt. With the remainder of the command, consisting of Colonel Wynkoop's battalion, Colonel Gorman's regiment of Indiana volunteers, Captain Heintzelman's battalion of six companies, Major Lally's mounted men, under Captain Walker, and five pieces of artillery, under Captain Taylor. After moving forward as rapidly as the nature of the ground admitted, the column came in sight of the city at one o'clock of October 9. The troops being halted, the advance guard of horsemen, under Captain Walker, was ordered to move forward to the entrance of the city, but not to enter if the enemy were in force, until the arrival of the infantry. When within about three miles, Walker observed parties of horsemen riding over the fields towards the city; and lest he might be anticipated, his men were put to a gallop. His progress was anxiously watched by General Lane, until owing to a hedge of thick maguay bushes on each side of the road, his movements were concealed from view. In a few minutes firing was heard from the city. About the same time a body of two thousand lancers were seen hurrying over the neighbouring hills, and General Lane ordered Colonel Gorman to advance with his regiment and enter Huamantla from the west, while Colonel Wynkoop moved towards the east.



CAPTAIN WALKER, on arriving at the entrance of the city, had discovered about five hundred of the enemy drawn up in the plaza. He immediately ordered a charge. Dashing among the Mexicans, his handful of men engaged hand to hand with three times their number, and after a close and bloody conflict, drove them away and captured three guns. A vigorous pursuit commenced, in which many feats of daring were performed, among which was the capture of Colonel La Vega and Major Iturbide, by Lieutenant Anderson, of the Georgia volunteers. The former was a brother of General La Vega, and the latter a son of the unfortunate emperor of Mexico. Anderson narrowly escaped with his life. A Mexican lieutenant was also taken.

After pursuing the enemy some distance, Walker's men imprudently dispersed, and returned to the square in small parties. This was in consequence of a belief that the enemy's entire force had been routed. Suddenly a company of lancers charged upon the plaza, and succeeded in separating the Americans into bodies. A desperate fight took place, in which the Mexicans behaved with unwonted courage; but by skilful manœuvering, Walker succeeded in uniting his forces, and entered the convent yard, where the command was dismounted. Here another action took place, in which the lancers were assisted by both artillery and infantry. Here, while directing the movements of his little band, Captain Walker fell mortally wounded, and soon afterwards expired. The enemy were driven back.

The exact manner in which Walker met his death is uncertain. The popular account is that he was lanced during the final charge by a Mexican whose son he had just slain. Authority equally reliable, states that he was shot from a house in which was displayed a white flag. Few men were ever more sincerely lamented. When the cry "Captain Walker is dead" rang through his company, the hardy soldiers burst into tears; and throughout the United States the profoundest emotions of sorrow were exibited at the news. He was one of the best officers in service; and the fame of his exploits on the Rio Grande, was not only spread over America, but throughout the most important countries of Europe. He had been one of the leading spirits of the Texan revolution, and "by a strange coincidence, he fell in the neighbourhood of the castle, where he once pined in captivity, but not in his former unhappy condition, as one of a few ragged, dispirited,



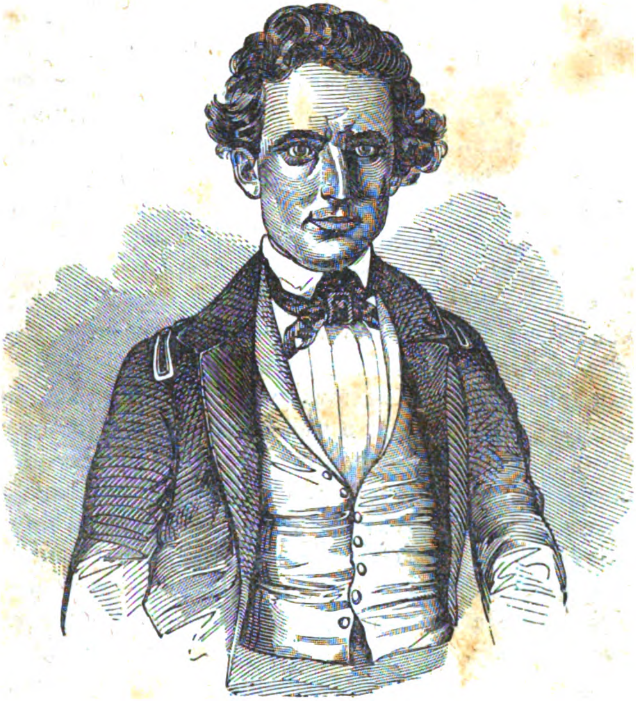
Major Iturbide.

half starved prisoners, jeered at by the dastard Mexicans, but in a glorious battle, heading the charge of the resistless rangers and in the arms of victory."

Meanwhile the main column of the American forces arrived at the city, and opened their fire upon masses of the enemy. Gorman, with the left wing of his regiment, proceeded towards the upper part of the town, where the enemy still were, and succeeded in dispersing them. At the same time Colonel Wynkoop's command had assumed position; but before they could open their batteries, the Mexicans had fled.

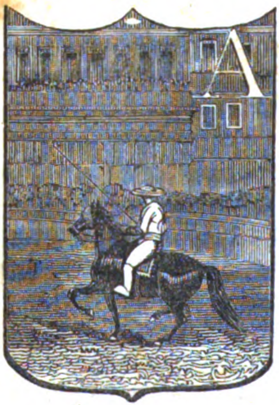
In this hard-fought action, the loss of the Americans was thirteen killed and eleven wounded. They succeeded in capturing one six-pounder brass gun, a mountain howitzer, numerous wagons, and a large quantity of ammunition. The Mexicans lost in killed and wounded one hundred and fifty.

After this battle, General Lane marched to the relief of Colonel



Captain Walker

Childs. He remained at Puebla with his whole force until the evening of the 18th of October, when information was received that the Mexican general, Rea, was at Atlixco, thirty miles distant, in considerable force. Lane immediately ordered his troops to be ready for marching on the following morning, at eleven o'clock. At that time he left Puebla with nearly the same force that had entered it, and after a forced march of five hours' duration, came in sight of the enemy's advance guard, near Santa Isabella. Here a halt was made, until the cavalry could come up from their examination of a neighbouring hacienda. Meanwhile, small parties of the enemy came to the foot of the hill, and opened a straggling fire, which did no execution. On the arrival of the cavalry, Lane put his whole force in motion; but as signs of confusion appeared among the Mexicans, he hurried on the cavalry to charge the enemy, and keep them engaged until the infantry could come up. As the Americans approached, the Mexicans retired, until at a small hill, about a mile and a half from their first position, they halted and fought severely. The action was continued until, by a forced march, the American infantry arrived, when they again fled, pursued by the cavalry. Another running fight of about four miles took place, during which many of the fugitives were cut down. When within less than two miles of Atlixco, the enemy's main body was observed posted on a side hill behind rows of chaparral hedges. Without stopping to ascertain their numbers, the cavalry dashed among them, dealing death on all sides, and forcing them within the thickest part of their shelter. Then dismounting, the assailants entered the chaparral, hand to hand with their foe. Here the struggle was long and terrible, scores of the enemy falling beneath the heavy blows of their opponents. This continued until the arrival of the infantry, who for the last six miles had been straining themselves to the utmost to join the cavalry, notwithstanding the previous fatiguing march of sixteen miles. The road being intersected by numerous gullies, prevented the artillery from advancing faster than at a walk; and so worn out were the cavalry, both through exertion and the heat of the weather, that they could pursue the enemy no farther. The column continued, however, to press forward towards the town, but night had already set in, when it reached a hill overlooking it. But the moon shone with a splendour which afforded a fine view of all the surrounding country, and enabled the American general to continue his operations with perfect certainty.



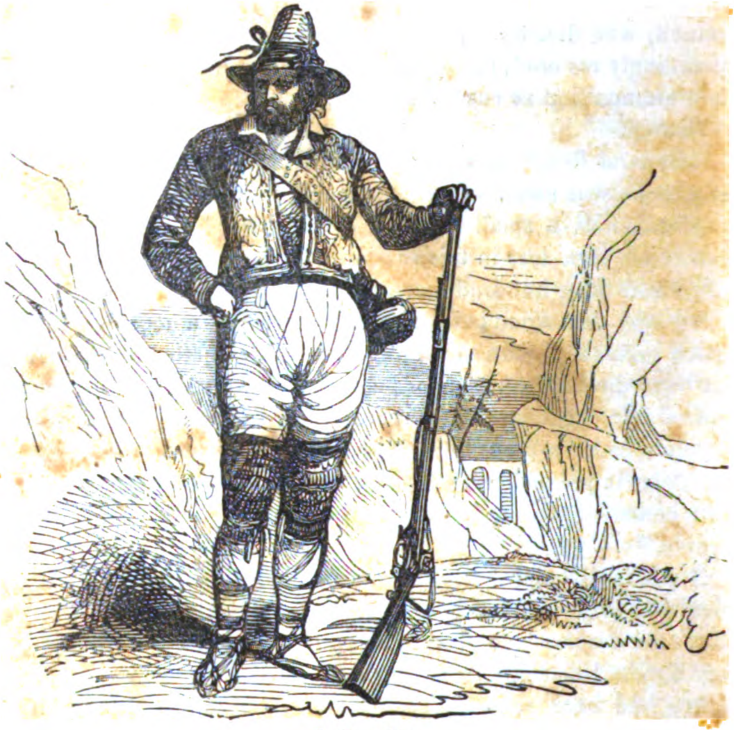
AS the Americans approached several shots were fired upon them; and deeming it imprudent to risk a street fight in an unknown town at night, General Lane ordered the artillery to be posted on a hill overlooking the town, and to open upon it. This was speedily put in execution, so that in a very short time the terrified inhabitants beheld flaming balls and shells hurled into their town, with a precision and effect to which their own system of warfare afforded no parallel. Every gun was served with the utmost rapidity; and amid the stillness of a Mexican night scene, the discharges of artillery pealed for miles around, while at intervals the crashing of walls and roofs afforded a strange and distressing contrast. This bombardment continued for nearly an hour, with great effect; the gunners being enabled by the moonlight to direct their shot to the most populous parts of the town.

The firing from the town had now ceased, and wishing to obtain, if possible, its surrender, Lane ordered Major Lally and Colonel Brough to advance cautiously with their commands into the town.

On their entering, the general was met by the *ayuntamiento*, or city council, who desired that their town might be spared. Quiet was accordingly restored, and on the following morning Lane disposed of such ammunition as could be found, and then commenced his return to Puebla.

"General Rea," says Lane, "had two pieces of artillery; but as soon as he was aware of our approach, he ordered them with haste to Matamoras, a small town eleven leagues beyond. The enemy state their own loss in this action to be two hundred and nineteen killed and three hundred wounded. On our part, we had one man killed and one wounded. Scarcely ever has a more rapid forced march been made than this, and productive of better results. Atlixco has been the head-quarters of guerrillas in this section of the country, and of late the seat of government in this state. From hence all expeditions have been fitted out against our troops. So much terror has been impressed upon them, at thus having war brought to their own homes, that I am inclined to believe they will give us no more trouble."

Reaching Cholula, on his return, General Lane found that the Mexicans had just finished two pieces of artillery at Guexocingo. These he resolved on destroying; and proceeding to the town with four hundred and fifty men, he commenced a thorough search. The pieces had been removed, but their carriages were found and destroyed. A party of the enemy were observed in the vicinity, who retreated precipitately; and the next morning, without further accident, Lane entered Puebla.



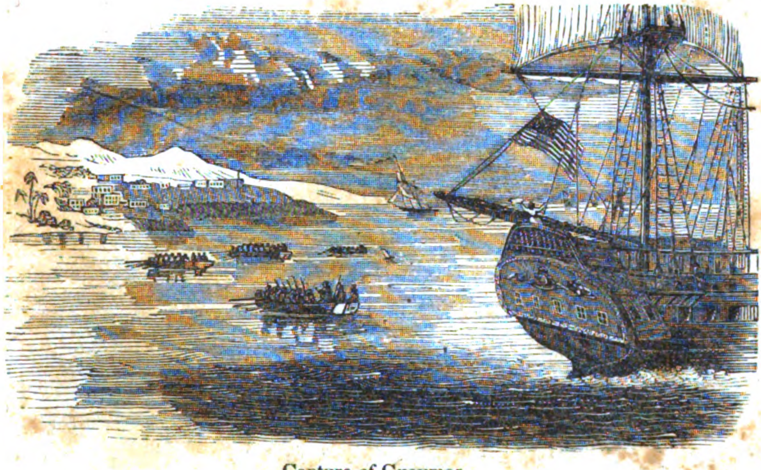
A Guerrilla.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CAPTURE OF GUAYMAS, AND MOVEMENTS OF THE GUERRILLAS.

THE important events attending General Scott's march to the capital, and the subsequent operations before Puebla, were followed by several battles between detached portions of the American army and guerrillas.

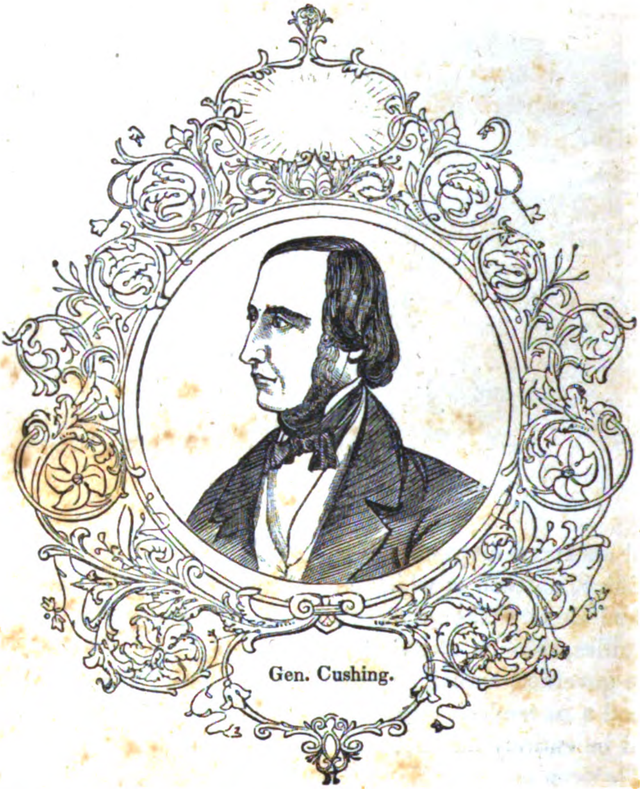
About the same time that the battle of Atlixco was fought, Captain Lavallette [October 15–16] entered the port of Guaymas, a small town on the gulf coast, with part of the American squadron, consisting of the frigate Congress, the sloop of war Portsmouth, and the brig Argo. On the 18th, the latter



Capture of Guaymas.

vessel anchored between the islands of Almagre Grande and Almagre Chico, on each of which a mortar was planted. The other vessels had already taken their stations. A flag was despatched to the authorities, through Mr. William Robinson, who, on being conducted to the governor, explained to him the object of the Americans, and advised a surrender. He was answered, that to surrender the town would be entirely incompatible with the honour both of the governor and Mexican nation. Mr. Robinson then returned to the Argo.

On the 19th, the Congress and Portsmouth took up their positions of attack. At the same time, the place was formally summoned to surrender, but the Mexicans artfully eluded an answer until night. Then, favoured by the darkness, the commandant marched silently to a position, three miles distant, where he had previously placed a battery of fourteen guns, to resist the Americans, should they attempt to penetrate into the interior. At six o'clock on the morning of the 20th, the fire of the assailants opened from both vessels of war, and two mortars, and continued for more than an hour. Five hundred shells and shot were thrown into the town, killing one English resident, and destroying several houses. Being abandoned by their garrison, the citizens signified their willingness to listen to terms, when a party of American sailors and marines landed and ran up the national flag on a fort defending the Casa Blanca hill. At the same time, Lavallette issued a proclamation, claiming the town and port for the United States, ordering the surrender of all public property and establishing throughout the district an efficient civil and military police. The Mexican authorities were invited to continue in office



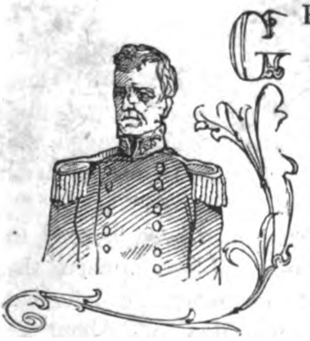
Gen. Cushing.

religion and church property were placed under the American protection, and the customary routine of business was ordered to be resumed. Mr. Robinson was made collector of the port.

About the same time another portion of the squadron captured the port of Mazatlan, also on the gulf coast.

The operations of General Lane, at Atlixco and Huamantla, were followed by a successful attack upon the town of Matamoras, which had been for a long time a principal rendezvous for guerrillas. After a slight skirmish, a party of Mexican lancers were defeated with loss, and the general took measures to hinder his being in future disturbed by them.

In the month of November, events of the most unhappy kind occurred at Mexico, tending to cast a shade over the proud enthusiasm of the officers, who had so heroically followed their leader to the conquest of the famed city of Montezuma. By an article in the military code, "private letters or reports, relative to military marches and operations" being "frequently mischievous in design, and always disgraceful to the army" are strictly forbidden; "and any officer found guilty of making such report for publication, without special permission, or of placing the writing beyond his control, so that it finds its way to the press, within one month after the termination of the campaign, to which it relates, shall be dismissed from the service."* Some time after the victories of August 19 and 20, extracts from private letters, dated, "Tacubaya, Mexico, August 24, 1847," purporting to be an original account of the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, appeared in the Pittsburg Post. By some means this account, copied in a Tampico paper, together with a similar one, from a New Orleans paper, fell into the hands of the general-in-chief, who immediately issued an order, denouncing the letters as despicable and scandalous, and intimating the general's surmisings of their authors. On the following day, Lieutenant-Colonel Duncan addressed a card to one of the leading Mexican papers, avowing his connection with the Pittsburg letter, and endeavouring to exculpate the generals suspected by the commander, from all blame. He and General Worth were the same day placed under arrest. Subsequently General Pillow was also arrested for contempt to his superior. On receiving news of this transaction, government suspended the general-in-chief himself, on specified charges, preferred in part as an appeal by General Worth, ordered a court-martial to try him with the other officers, and placed the army under command of Major-General Butler.



GENERAL TOWSON, paymaster-general, was appointed president of the court. The other members, first named by President Polk, were Brigadier-General Caleb Cushing, and Colonel E. G. W. Butler. Lieutenant Hammond was named as chief advocate. Subsequently Colonel Butler was relieved, and brevet Colonel Belknap appointed in his place. In like manner, Captain S. C. Ridgely succeeded Lieutenant Hammond, as judge advocate and recorder. Perote was first named as the place of meeting, but this was afterwards changed to Puebla.

On the 18th of February, 1848, this body met at the last named city. After remaining in session there for some time, it was removed to Fredericktown, Maryland. All the officers accused were present, and the deliberations occupied the attention of the court,

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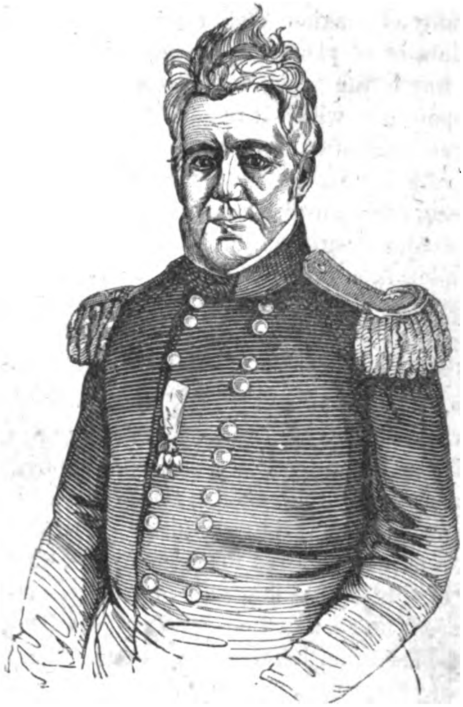
* General Regulations of the Army, March 1, 1825.

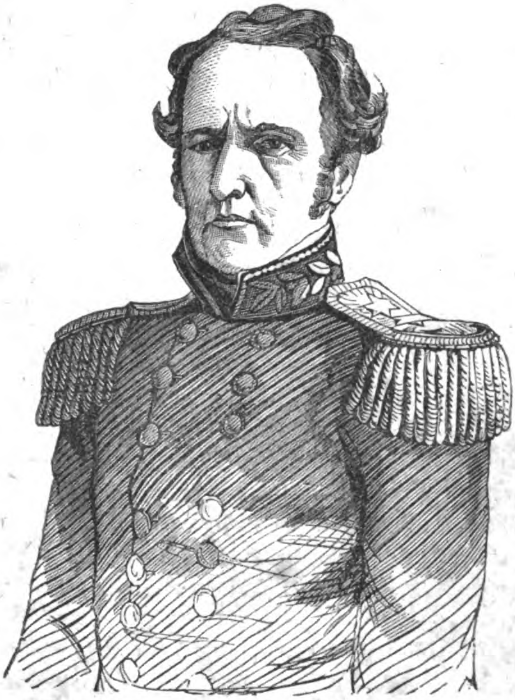


General Towson.

until after the close of the war. The proceedings, as they transpired, were published daily, both in the United States and Mexico. They excited but one feeling throughout the country—that of regret, that the gallant men who had carried themselves so nobly through the trying scenes of a two years' war, should, at its close, be involved in such unfortunate and unsatisfactory difficulties.

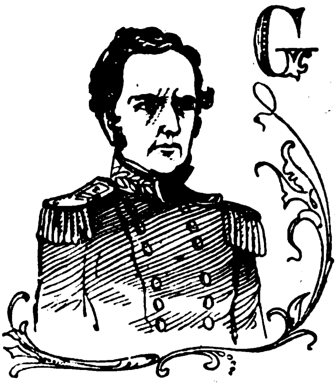
After the fall of the capital, General Twiggs had been ordered to Jalapa, to organize a train, for the main army, and keep in check the neighbouring guerrillas. On the 19th of November, he left that city, with a considerable force and marched for Mexico. About the same time General Butler also entered the capital with a train, and supplies.

General Patterson, during all that part of the campaign following Scott's march from Puebla, had been stationed at Vera Cruz, endeavouring to keep open the communication with the advancing army, as well as to chastise the guerrillas who swarmed in that vicinity. These roaming bands were organized and encouraged by the famous Padre Jarauta, an ecclesiastic, who, abandoning his sacerdotal duties, or rathe



General Patterson.

combining them with those of the soldier, had thrown the whole weight of his influence against the friends of peace. Troops armed and furnished by him went forth as to a crusade, and became far more troublesome to the Americans than Santa Anna's army. The padre's followers were as daring in their efforts to cut off the American trains, as they were unscrupulous in the use of what victory threw into their hands. Frequently they approached within pistol-shot of their opponent's camp, and on several occasions, as has been mentioned in a previous chapter, actually entered at night into Vera Cruz, and carried away mules or horses. During the operations before the capital, they committed frightful depredations between that city and Vera Cruz, and cut off all communication between these two portions of the army. The mails were frequently stopped and plundered by them, and such delay caused to those which escaped, that frequently more than a month transpired after the usual time of delivery. From this cause General Scott's reports of the battles of August, did not reach Washington until the middle of November. To the partial success of the guerrillas may be attributed the obstinacy of the Mexicans in refusing to listen to terms of peace.



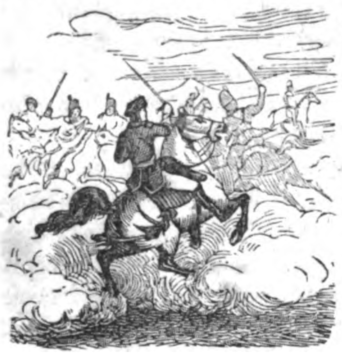
GENERAL PATTERSON, in the fall of 1847, left Vera Cruz with his division and a large train, and advanced by easy marches to Jalapa. The command of the former place was intrusted to Colonel Wilson. On the 25th of November, Patterson left Jalapa with six thousand men, en route for the capital. Before his departure [November 23d] he had hung two American teamsters for the murder of a Mexican boy, and on the following day shot two Mexican officers, Garcia and Alcade, for violation of parole. This proceeding caused so much excitement among the people that an open insurrection seemed for awhile inevitable; and the neighbouring guerrilla bands exerted themselves to the utmost to revenge their countrymen. After suppressing these demonstrations of revolt, Patterson recommenced his journey, and reached the city of Mexico December 6.

About the middle of December, a body of Americans were attacked near Mazatlan, by some guerrillas, led by an officer named Mijares. He was killed, and his men repulsed with considerable loss. A similar engagement, farther to the north, also resulted in victory to the American arms. On the night of the 21st, an expedition was sent to Cholula, to apprehend some American officers. A fight took place, in which three of the enemy were killed and three wounded.

Early in January, the Mexican general, Valencia, was captured by a small party especially organized for the purpose. The particulars are given by a member of the army. "Colonel F. M. Wynkoop, of the 1st Pennsylvania volunteers, having learned by a Mexican friend, that Padre Jarauta and General Rea were at Tlalnepanatla, about five leagues from the city of Mexico, applied to General Scott for permission to take twenty men and capture them. Permission being granted, the colonel set off on the 1st [January,] with thirty-eight Texan rangers, under command of Lieutenants Daggerts, Burkes, and Jones. Upon arriving at, and charging Tlalnepanatla, and finding no one there, they learned that Rea and Jarauta had left for Toluco, a few hours previous to our arrival. Colonel Wynkoop here learned that General Valencia and his staff were at a hacienda some six leagues distant. He immediately set off with his party, and arrived at the hacienda, which he surrounded. Admittance into the house was demanded by the party, but for a time refused, when Colonel Siba, a wounded Mexican officer on parole, opened the door and assured Colonel Wynkoop that General Valencia had departed that day for Toluco; but this not being credited, lights were demanded to search the building. Colonel Siba then proposed to deliver General Valencia the next day, if the party would leave. To this the colonel would not assent, but proposed to send an officer and eight men with him to await their return. This proposition completely disconcerted Colonel Siba, thus convincing Colonel Wynkoop that Valencia was really in the house. Search was accordingly made, but he could not be found. The colonel then declared that he would not leave the hacienda without him; that if Valencia would give himself up, he would be perfectly safe, but that he could not answer for his life should he attempt an escape. At this moment a person stepped up and said, 'I am Valencia.' He then said that it was against the usages of civilized warfare to attack a man in the peace and quiet of his family in the dead hour of night. The colonel answered that it was the only way he could be captured. Colonel Arrera was also captured in the same hacienda on that night."

About a week after, another capture of officers took place, in the neighbourhood of Santa Fe. About fifty guerrillas, under Colonel Zenobia, were charged and dispersed by Colonel Dominguez, after which the latter proceeded to the plains of Salva, where he received a communication from the neighbouring haciendas, requesting his assistance in liberating the inhabitants from the tyranny of General Torrejon. On the 6th, Dominguez charged the Mexican party, and after a short skirmish dispersed it, capturing Generals Torrejon, Minon, Guana, fifty cavalry, and two deserters. The Mexican general had with him one hundred and fifty men, being on his way to join some forces at San Andres, and proceed thence to Orizaba. The American force was seventy.

THESE losses only tended to render the guerrillas more daring and revengeful. About the 1st of January, a large train, composed of many wagons, and carrying a great amount of specie, set out for the interior, under the direction of Colonel Miles. The rear portion of the train was unable to leave until the morning of the 4th. In moving over the heavy sand, the train and pack mules became so scattered, that a company of mounted riflemen, under Lieutenant Walker, were thrown seven miles behind the main body of the wagon train. At nine o'clock, word was received that a guerrilla party at Santa Fe, had captured some of the packs scattered along the road. At this information, Lieutenant Walker left ten men with some wagons which had not been able to keep up, and moving towards Santa Fe, came in sight of the enemy, drawn up in order of battle. A charge was ordered, when the guerrillas scattered in different directions, and opened a heavy fire upon the lieutenant's little company. All communication with the main party was thus cut off, and Walker sent back to Vera Cruz for assistance. The enemy's fire so frightened the horses of the rifle company, that they were obliged to dismount and fight on the open prairie. Five of his men were killed and five wounded. The Mexicans captured three hundred pack mules, and about one hundred thousand dollars in specie.

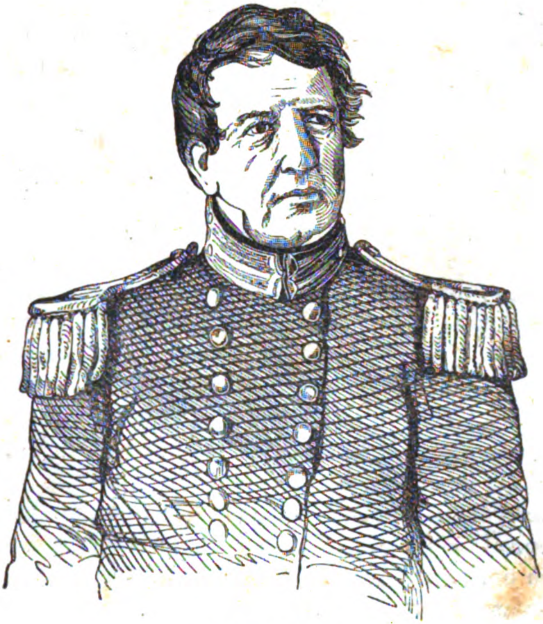


On the 12th of January, Colonel Hays, with one hundred rangers and a few Illinois volunteers, reached Teotihuacan, twelve leagues north-east of Mexico, in pursuit of Jarauta. Here, while the party were reposing at a hacienda, with their horses unbridled and unsaddled, the padre came suddenly upon them with a party of guerrillas. With wonted presence of mind, the colonel instantly rallied his men, when a most severe battle took place, the rangers being on foot. Unfortunately for the assailants, their shot were fired too high, and consequently produced no effect. Eight of their number were killed. The padre himself is said to have been severely wounded, and one of his men made prisoner.

About this time the towns of Serma, Toluco, and Pachuca, were occupied by different portions of the American army, principally from the command of General Cadwalader. Orizaba was also taken by a detachment of five hundred cavalry under General Lane.

On the 14th of January, a train of two thousand wagons, escorted by a squadron of cavalry, two companies of dragoons, a voltigeur corps with six pieces, and some battalions of infantry—the whole under Major Cadwalader, of the voltigeurs—left the city of Mexico on the 14th, en route for Vera Cruz. Great efforts were made by the guerrillas to cut off portions of this train, but without success. It arrived safely on the coast, January 27th, bringing with it a number of officers.

In the same month, Colonel Childs intercepted certain letters of a



Colonel Bankhead.

treasonous nature at Puebla. A conspiracy had been formed there by General Rea, and some of his associates, to assassinate Don Raphael Isunza, the Mexican governor of state, and murder such of the inhabitants as were in favour of peace with the United States. The object of this movement was to abolish the existing government, and proclaim Rea dictator. Colonel Childs immediately took efficient measures to prevent the execution of this diabolical plot, and issued a proclamation ordering all spies to leave the city, and rendering it penal for any of the inhabitants to hold communication with the guerrillas. No attempt was made to carry the plan into execution.

On the 7th of February, two large trains left Vera Cruz, one for Orizaba, and the other for the city of Mexico. The first was escorted by sixteen hundred men, under Colonel Bankhead, who, since the 16th of December, had been civil and military governor of Vera Cruz. Both trains arrived safely at their destination, although keenly watched by the guerrillas. A short time previous to this, [December 12, 1847,] General Scott had issued an order against the guerrillas by which every American post established in Mexico was authorized to push daily detachments as far as practicable upon the roads, in order to protect them from the marauding parties. "No quarters," says the order, "will be given to known murderers or robbers, whether called guerrillas or rancheros, and whether serving under Mexican commissions or not. They are equally pests to unguarded Mexicans, foreigners, and small parties of Americans, and ought to be exterminated. Offenders of the above character, accidentally falling into the hands of the American troops, will be momentarily held as prisoners, that is, not put to death without due solemnity. Accordingly, they will be reported to commanding officers, who will, without delay, order a council of war for the summary trial of the offenders, under the known laws of war applicable to such cases.

"A council of war may consist of any number of officers not less than three nor more than thirteen, and may, for any flagrant violation of the laws of war, condemn to death, or to lashes, not exceeding fifty, on satisfactory proof that such prisoner, at the time of capture, actually belonged to any party or gang of known robbers or murderers, or had actually committed murder or robbery upon any American officer or soldier, or follower of the American army."

This order called forth active operations from the different portions of General Scott's army, and several guerrilla parties were entirely broken up, or driven from the neighbourhood. Yet such was the recklessness of these marauding bands, that the roads continued to be infested, and travellers or stragglers from the American army to be murdered. Arrests were made, and the prisoners executed, until the close of the war.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OPERATIONS IN CALIFORNIA AND NEW MEXICO.

THE apparent tranquillity which followed the establishment of American authority in California and New Mexico, was never very profound, nor of long duration. However advantageous a change of government may be to any people, they are apt to regard it, if forcibly imposed by an invading army, with a jealous eye, and to take every means to effect a counter revolution. This has received the most ample confirmation during the Mexican war, wherein the Mexicans have been protected in life, religion, and property, and yet look upon their protectors as robbers of the most aggravated character. Although California has never professed any other than a nominal allegiance to the Mexican government, and frequently has declared against her, yet is this feeling against the Americans as strong there as in the central provinces; and from the moment of Fremont's entrance into the territory, until the close of the war, this region was held only by the strict hand of military power.

In July, 1847, three companies of the 7th regiment of New York volunteers under Lieutenant-Colonel Burton, arrived in the vicinity of La Paz, Lower California. They numbered about one hundred men, with two pieces of artillery. Towards the close of September, the sloop of war Dale sailed from La Paz to Mulege, a port near the head of the Californian gulf, where a party of Mexicans, with arms and ammunition, were reported to be collected for the purpose of raising a revolution. On entering, the Dale hoisted her colours, and sent a flag on shore, requesting the surrender of the town. The Mexican authorities answered, that acting as they did under advice from government, they could not listen to the demand, and that if the sloop approached within gun range, she would be fired upon. On receiving this reply, the Dale entered the port, but was not fired upon. Next day eighty men were sent on shore, who were fired upon while landing, but afterwards chased a party of Mexicans for two or three miles; night coming on, they were withdrawn. At the same time, a few shells were thrown into the town, and a schooner burnt. On the following morning, the Dale left for La Paz, bringing the information that two hundred Mexicans were marching towards that place, and might be expected in a few days. This report, however, proved incorrect.

In the latter part of October, Commodore Shubrick arrived at San Jose, and ordered the Dale to Guaymas, to relieve the Portsmouth. This deprived Colonel Burton of all naval assistance, and entirely cut off his retreat, in case of necessity. Unwilling to remain in this situation, the colonel proceeded to San Jose, in order to obtain from the commodore two hundred men with which he hoped to quiet the country. His request was refused, and the commodore sailed for Mazatlan.

Meanwhile, the enemy were using the most strenuous efforts to raise a force sufficient to rid themselves of the American troops. Leaving Mulege, they passed through the country, robbing ranchos, and committing the greatest depredations upon the property even of their own citizens. Several of these marauding bands, after securing all the arms, provisions, money, and stores they could possibly raise, concentrated at San Antonio, formed a territorial junta or congress, and issued proclamations to the inhabitants. These movements had the effect of bringing out the whole region against the little garrison at La Paz. Those who had hitherto taken no active part in military operations, now engaged in the campaign with the zeal of crusaders.

Between one and two o'clock of the morning of November 16th, Burton's men were wakened by a loud roll of musketry, followed by shouts from an unseen enemy. Thus suddenly roused, each man sought his post amid a shower of balls. The night was so excessively dark, that they gained knowledge of the enemy's position only by the flash from their guns, and the Mexicans' battle cry. The enemy's balls continued to whistle among the garrison, until the Americans brought their cannon within range, when a few volleys were followed by a dead silence. Expecting, momentarily, a renewal of the attack, the troops remained in position until daylight, when they discovered that the enemy, about three hundred in number, had entered the town and posted themselves on a hill, about a quarter of a mile distant. Here they were awaiting the removal of the women and children, in order to begin the main attack.

ABOUT nine o'clock on the morning of the 16th, a heavy firing commenced from some thick cactus-bushes, which almost surrounded the camp. Among these the Mexicans were concealed so carefully, that their presence was known only through the flashes of musketry. During the whole morning the Americans had laboured to fortify their position, covering the roofs of houses with bales of cotton yarn. As the Mexicans were several hundred yards off, the garrison lay down, in order to entice them nearer; but, being posted with perfect security in an old building near a grave yard, the enemy would not approach, and thus an idle fire was maintained until noon. The Americans had one man killed.

At four o'clock, P. M., the enemy concentrated their forces, entered the town, and set fire to a number of houses belonging to those who had favoured the Americans. In returning from this barbarous proceeding, they passed a low hill in front of the American barracks, which immediately opened upon them. A shower of grape and canister, sweeping through their ranks, killed ten or twelve, and caused so much confusion as to drive back the survivors from the streets. As the sun went down the firing ceased, leaving only the lurid glare of burning buildings as the finale of this busy and exciting day.

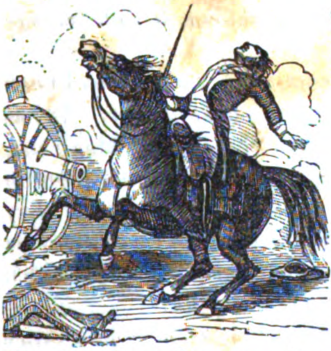
In this first day's skirmish, the American force was one hundred and twenty-six, the Mexicans at least three hundred. One company of the former, consisting of sixty men, was placed on the roof of the main building, under Captain S. G. Steele and Lieutenant Penrose. The other company was in the barracks on the opposite side of the square, and on the roof, under command of Lieutenants Matsell and Buffum. The volunteers were partly under Lieutenant Young, and partly with the artillery of Lieutenant Lemon.

ON the morning following, a large party of the enemy were observed on a hill two miles distant, where they had hoisted a flag. Among them were about sixty Yake Indians from Sonora. The whole command was mounted on spirited horses, and armed with muskets and rifles. The commander was Manuel Pineda, a lieutenant in the Mexican army, with whom were associated a number of leaders from the eastern coast, and two or three from California. After daylight a few shots were fired at the Americans, but without effect. The latter improved the temporary cessation by digging an intrenchment around the square, burning a number of small houses which obstructed their cannon-range, and strengthening as much as possible their lines of defence. In this position the parties remained for several days, each waiting an attack from the other.

On the 20th a proclamation, signed by Pineda, was found posted at different places in the town, promising to treat all Americans with lenity, and stating the determination of the Mexicans to conquer Burton's party. The latter redoubled their vigilance, threw up a breastwork around the main buildings, and a barricade around the cannon, fortified all the roofs, and were constantly at their posts.

At noon of the same day, a party of footmen were observed dragging a piece of artillery through the surrounding thickets, towards a building known as the Old Quartel, which, although the most prominent position of the town, the Americans had failed to occupy, on account of its dilapidated condition. This position reached, a fire commenced simultaneously from all sides. The showers of slugs and shot from this gun were answered by grape from the American cannon, and for a little while the action was warmly contested. A heavy shell, exploding among the Mexicans, drove them from their position, and silenced their piece; but they continued a heavy fire of musketry from the Quartel, and other places. During the whole time the monotonous tapping of a drum was heard, evidently with the design of exciting the assailants to valour. The battle continued until night, the darkness of which enabled the enemy to creep quite near to the works, and shelter themselves behind some adjacent banks. The battle continued, at intervals the garrison discharging musketry and cannon-shot, and receiving showers of rifle balls and Indian arrows. At eight o'clock the assailants withdrew, with the loss of six men.

Next morning ten men entered the Quartel, hoisted the Mexican flag, and commenced firing. When this had continued more than an hour, Captain Stell, with twenty men, was sent against them. He surprised the party, killing six and taking their flag, which was immediately inverted under that of the garrison. This check caused their whole force to retire; but they spread themselves in the neighbourhood, to await reinforcements and cut off supplies from the American camp.



WHILE this battle was going on at La Paz, a party of one hundred and fifty Mexicans, under Antonio Mejares, approached San Jose, where Lieutenant Heywood, of the United States marines, was stationed, with twenty men and a nine-pounder. On the 20th of November, they sent in a flag of truce, with a demand to surrender, which was refused. The Mexican flag was then run up, and ten o'clock, P. M., the attack upon the American position commenced. After the firing had continued all night and the following day, a grand assault was made on the ensuing night. At eleven o'clock, a party of forty men, under Mejares, charged in front, while a hundred, with scaling-ladders, were placed in the rear. When they had arrived in front of the nine-pounder, it suddenly opened upon them, killing their intrepid leader, with three of his men, and driving back the others in confusion. A similar discharge against those in the rear, was attended with similar results. A firing of musketry was, however, kept up until morning. On the following day two American whalers entered the harbour, and sent fifty men on shore. These vessels were mistaken by the enemy for ships of war, on which they retreated in haste to La Paz.

Previous to this battle, various alterations in command had taken place in Upper California, New Mexico, and along the Pacific coast. A battalion of Mormons having reached the plains of California, united their efforts with those of the regular army in restoring order in the affairs of government. Previous to sailing for the United States, Commodore Stockton had declared the whole country to be tranquil, and the inhabitants pleased with the change of government. Allured by these representations, and the temptations held out by government, numbers of emigrants left the United States, and set out to find a new home beyond the Rocky Mountains. The hopes of these adventurers seem, in many cases, to have been disappointed. Several of their parties, while crossing the mountains, were overtaken by snow storms, during which many perished. So great was the scarcity of provisions, that whole parties were reduced to a few meagre, famished wretches, whose only food was the horrid repast afforded by the bodies of their dead companions. On arriving in the country, they in some places found the soil of surprising fertility; but, in other instances, large companies found themselves on desert tracts, trodden, from time immemorial, only by the Indian and his savage companions of the brute creation.

Neither had the condition of affairs continued such as had been represented by the commodore, in his report to government. As has been remarked in the opening of the present chapter, the Mexicans, throughout all their provinces, looked upon the Americans more in the light of invaders than friends; and consequently, although they felt in some measure the superiority of the government established by General Kearny, yet they permitted no opportunity to escape which appeared favourable for shaking off the imposed yoke.

THIS involved the whole country in a series of civil broils, the more vexatious from their being apparently endless. The truth is that in California and New Mexico, as in other parts of the republic, the Americans could positively claim only so much of the soil as they occupied with their army; and even that was lost as soon as deserted by a competent defensive force.

After Stockton's departure, Commodore Shubrick, was placed in command of the squadron operating upon that portion of the coast which borders on California. This officer imposed upon several of the neighbouring towns a tariff of duties, and adopted such measures as was in his power, for the security of the adjoining provinces.

Early in 1847, Commodore Biddle took charge of the entire squadron. One of his first acts was to annul a former act of Commodore Stockton, placing the Pacific coast under blockade. The repeal of this onerous measure was equally gratifying to the American residents and the crews of foreign nations. The ports of Guaymas and Mazatlan were, however, placed under control of the squadron, the ships of which maintained an ascendency in the neighbourhood until the capture of these towns, as formerly related.

Meanwhile General Price had been placed in New Mexico, with a considerable force, and used great efforts to restore tranquillity in the province. Late in January, 1848, he ordered three companies of United States dragoons, nine of horse, five of infantry, and one company of light artillery, to concentrate at El Paso, preparatory to a march upon Chihuahua. On the 23d of February, the general arrived there in person, with one company of Missouri horse. Here he immediately commenced active preparations for the intended expedition. While thus engaged, he received such information as confirmed previous reports, respecting the enemy's hostility, and of their fabricating cannon and other implements to resist the march to El Paso. The Mexican residents in this quarter were in a state of

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* The real condition of these distant provinces during the war, seems never to have been understood by either the people or government of our country. Although New Mexico was in almost open hostility to the central government, yet the feeling against the Americans was as strong there as in the more southern provinces. The favourable disposition, over which the first conquerors were accustomed to congratulate themselves, was never any thing but the deceitful lull which is quiet only because it thereby husbands the power of the approaching hurricane. Commodore Stockton and Colonel Fremont certainly deserve great credit for the brilliant style in which they accomplished the conquest of California; but the means at their disposal were totally inadequate to secure permanently the conquests which they had made. Considering the small force of the Americans in California and their distance from any support or supplies, it must always be a subject of astonishment and admiration that they were ever able to gain any foothold in the country; and still more remarkable is it that, in opposition to the concealed but bitter hostility of the people, they should have been able to hold possession of the country to the close of the war.

One of the most determined as well as important demonstrations of hostility evinced by the people of this region was their opposition to General Price's expedition. The country through which he passed had already been conquered by Commodore Stockton and General Kearny, and portions of it reconquered by Fremont. In many of the towns, local governments had been established, and the oath of allegiance administered to the inhabitants. But these conquests were but the effects of the presence of a large military force, having in them nothing of the will or the affections. Secret conspiracies against the Americans were continually carried on; and as the garrisons of the conquered towns grew weaker, the conspirators threw off by degrees their reserve, and banded in open opposition to our forces. It will cease then to excite our wonder that notwithstanding the efficient army of General Price, he found himself at every town surrounded with armed foes with whom several battles had to be fought before he could be considered even in safety.

revolt against American authority; and the general soon found that he was likely to be opposed at every step of his progress.

UNDER these circumstances, the American commander resolved on changing his original plan of operations, and by forced marches with his best troops, to strike a blow upon the enemy before he could adopt measures of defence. Accordingly, on the night of the 24th, he despatched Màjor Walker, with three companies of the Santa Fe battalion of horse, to occupy the small town of Carrizal, distant ninety miles from El Paso, and so situated as to command all the passes leading to Chihuahua. This command had orders to reconnoiter the country, cut off all communication by establishing strong pickets, and make every effort to obtain information respecting the designs and movements of the enemy.

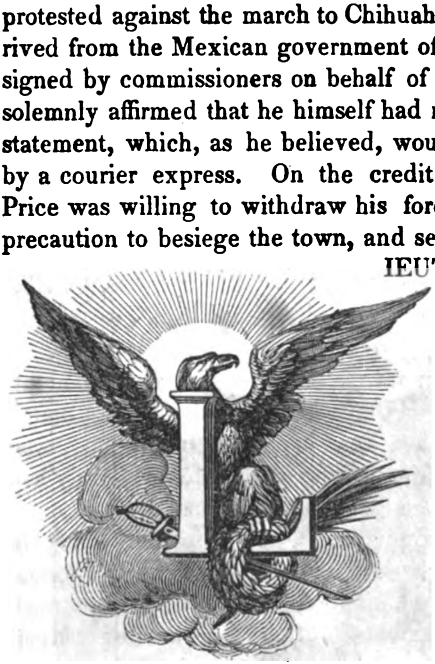
On the night of March 6th, when within sixty miles of Chihuahua, a small party of the advance came upon one of the enemy's pickets, but was unable to capture it. Aware that his march would be known on the following morning, the general pushed forward his command with all haste, until he arrived at Laguna, six miles from the Sacramento. Here he was met by a flag of truce, from the general commanding the Mexican forces, who protested against the advance upon Chihuahua, on the ground that instructions had been received from the Mexican government, suspending hostilities, as a treaty of peace had been concluded and signed by commissioners on behalf of both governments. Although this assertion afterwards proved to be correct, Price did not consider the evidence adduced as conclusive, and would not receive the protest. The bearer of the flag then requested that two American officers might accompany him to his superiors, in order to arrange terms of capitulation. To this the general consented, naming Captain McKissick and Lieutenant Prince as the two negotiators.

Fearful, however, of treachery on the enemy's part, he, that night, moved his command rapidly upon Chihuahua. After about an hour's march, he was met by some American residents of the city, who informed him that on the morning previous, the Mexican army had hastily retreated, taking with them all their munitions of war.

General Price had anticipated this event, and prepared for it. On the day before, Beall's dragoons were detached, so that by a forced march over the mountains, they might occupy the Durango road, and possibly encounter the Mexicans during their hurried retreat. These troops executed their mission in the most satisfactory manner, but owing to the nature of the road, and the lateness of the hour of starting, they could not come up with the flying foe.

The Americans, at nine o'clock P. M., of March 7, took possession of Chihuahua. On the following morning, General Price selected about two hundred and fifty men, mostly mounted, and pursued the retreating Mexicans. At sunrise of the 9th, he reached the town of Santa Cruz de Rosales, sixty miles of Chihuahua, where the enemy had strongly fortified themselves. Here the general halted his troops and commenced a careful reconnoissance of his opponent's numbers and position. Notwithstanding the great superiority of the enemy in men, ammunition, and stores, he determined to attack their works by storm. Preparatory to this, he dismounted the commands of Rall and Walker, to act as infantry, and posting Beall's dragoons in reserve, to intercept the enemy's flight, in case of success, he chose the west side of the town for Rall's assault, and the south-east angle for Walker's. He then despatched Lieutenant Prince, with a flag of truce, to demand an unconditional surrender of the town and public property.

On receiving this summons General Trias, the Mexican leader, requested an interview with the American commander. His reasons for this request were the same as those for which he had previously protested against the march to Chihuahua—that official notice had arrived from the Mexican government of a treaty of peace having been signed by commissioners on behalf of both powers. General Trias solemnly affirmed that he himself had no doubt as to the truth of this statement, which, as he believed, would be confirmed in a few days by a courier express. On the credit of these assurances, General Price was willing to withdraw his forces for a few days, taking the precaution to besiege the town, and send for reinforcements.

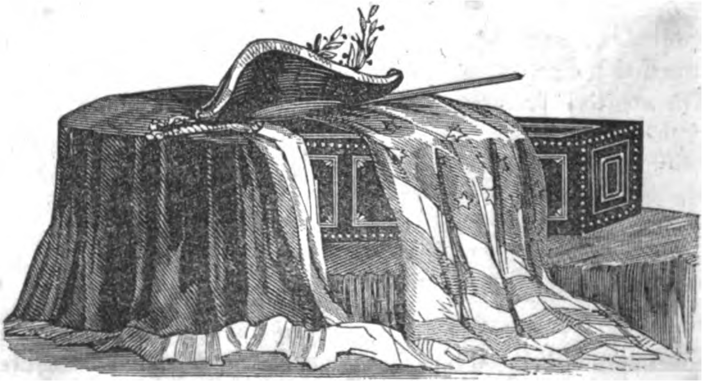


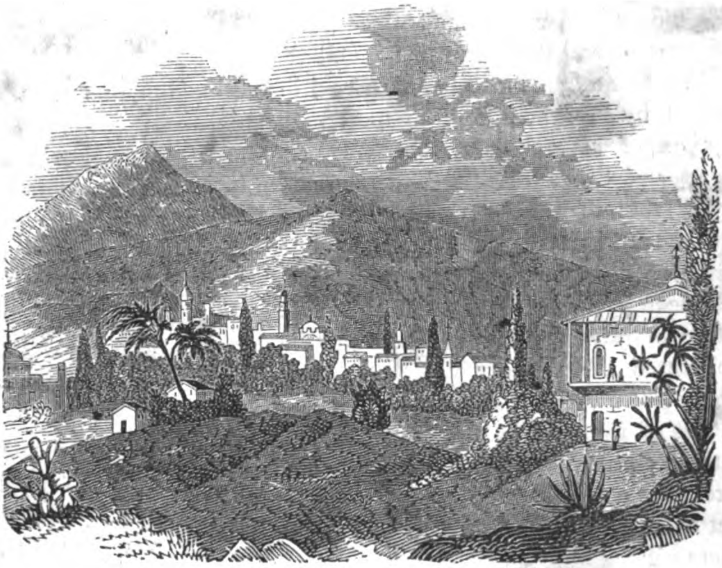
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LANE, with the expected reinforcements arrived about daylight of the 16th. They consisted of three companies of Missouri horse, under Lane, and Love's battery of artillery. With this accession to his numbers, General Price determined to risk an assault in order to end a siege which had become peculiarly trying to his soldiers. Careful reconnoissances convinced him that the enemy had expected this event to take place on that part of the town which fronted the American camp, and had there prepared for it. To take advantage of this opinion, General Price determined on changing his original plan, and by moving rapidly to some weaker point, assault and carry it before the garrison could recover themselves.

Accordingly, at seven o'clock, A. M., he broke up his camp, and with his whole force, except Beall's dragoons, and a company of Missouri horse, marched to the western side of the town. Here Lieutenant-Colonel Lane, with two companies of the Missouri regiment, was ordered to support Love's battery, which had taken position within five hundred yards of the town, on the road leading to Chihuahua, and commanding the principal plaza and church, around and in which the enemy were strongly posted. Walker's battalion was placed towards the south; while between these two commands were four companies of Rall's troops, conducted by the general in person.

At half past ten, the American batteries opened. For nearly an hour a heavy fire was poured into the town, destroying houses, and other buildings, and gradually driving the enemy from their positions. It was answered by heavy guns and wall pieces, which produced, however, little or no effect upon the assailants. Shortly after sundown, the garrison surrendered. General Trias and forty-two of his principal officers were made prisoners; while eleven pieces of artillery, nine wall pieces, and five hundred and seventy-seven stand of arms fell into the hands of the Americans. The loss of the assailants was one lieutenant, two corporals, and one private killed; and nineteen men wounded; that of the enemy is stated by General Price to have been several hundred. On the 21st, General Armijo, ex-governor of New Mexico, surrendered himself to the victors.

This battle closed the military events of the war in California and New Mexico.





CHAPTER XXXVII.

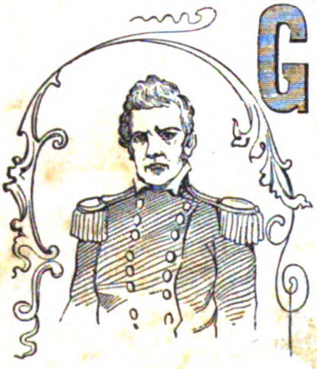
CLOSE OF THE WAR.

THE remaining military operations of the war may be summed up in a few words. General Lane left the capital on the 17th of February, 1848, and after an unsuccessful attempt to capture General Paredes, at a hacienda called San Christoval, he subsequently encountered and defeated a party commanded by Padre Jarauta, and returned to the capital on the 1st of March.

The abortive attempts of Mr. Trist to establish peace, immediately after the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, did not terminate his mission as a negotiator with the Mexican republic. Efforts were made both by himself and General Scott, from time to time, for the purpose of bringing about so desirable a result. These were at length crowned with success. In January, the general-in-chief laid before the Mexican authorities the basis of a treaty, similar in its general features to the one formerly rejected. They appointed Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Conto, and Miguel Atristain as commissioners.

Mr. Trist acted as the representative of the United States. The negotiators met at Guadalupe Hidalgo, and after a reciprocal communication of their respective powers, arranged and signed a "treaty of peace, friendship, limits and settlement between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic."

In February, this instrument arrived in Washington, and was transmitted by President Polk to the American Senate. After a secret session of several days, that body, on the 10th of March, at a quarter past nine o'clock, P. M., agreed to it, after a few alterations, by a vote of thirty-seven to fifteen, four senators being absent. On the 14th, Mr. Sevier was appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, to present the treaty as amended to the Mexican congress for their final action. He was accompanied by Mr. Clifford. On arriving in Mexico, these gentlemen immediately submitted the treaty to the national congress, then assembled at Queretaro. After a long and animated discussion, it passed the House of Deputies by a large majority, and on the 25th of May was ratified in the Senate by a vote of thirty-three to five.* Although strenuous efforts had been made to prevent the consummation of this act by several partisan leaders and members of the public press, yet there can be little doubt that the great body of the Mexican nation rejoiced at the prospect of peace. Information of the ratification was received in Mexico with the ringing of bells, discharging of fireworks, and other manifestations of satisfaction.



GREAT preparations were made for the immediate withdrawal of the American troops from Mexico, in accordance with the spirit of the treaty. The duty of superintending the necessary arrangements devolved on General Butler, who, in consequence of the suspension of General Scott, had been appointed by the president to the chief command. The general-in-chief had left the city of Mexico on the 22d of April, reached Vera Cruz on the 30th, and immediately embarked for the United States. Mr. Sevier left the capital on the 12th of June, and arrived at Vera Cruz about the 20th, superintending in his route, the marching of the troops towards that city. The army left Vera Cruz by detachments, the greater part arriving in New Orleans before the middle of June.

* See Appendix.

APPENDIX.

TREATY

Of Peace, Friendship, Limits, and Settlement, between the United States of America, and the Mexican Republic, concluded at Guadalupe Hidalgo, on the Second Day of February, with Amendments by the American Senate, March 10th, 1848, and by the Mexican Senate, May 25th, 1848.

THE TREATY.

In the name of Almighty God:

The United States of America and the United Mexican States, animated by a sincere desire to put an end to the calamities of the war which unhappily exists between the two republics, and to establish on a solid basis relations of peace and friendship, which shall confer reciprocal benefits on the citizens of both, and assure the concord, harmony, and mutual confidence wherein the two people should live as good neighbours, have, for that purpose, appointed their respective plenipotentiaries; that is to say, the President of the United States has appointed N. P. Trist, a citizen of the United States, and the President of the Mexican republic has appointed Don Louis Gonzaga Cuevas, Don Bernardo Conto, and Don Miguel Atristain, citizens of the said republic, who, after a reciprocal communication of their respective powers, have, under the protection of Almighty God, the author of peace, arranged, agreed upon, and signed the following treaty of peace, friendship, limits, and settlement, between the United States of America and the Mexican republic.

Art. I.—There shall be a firm and universal peace between the United States of America and the Mexican republic, and between their respective countries, territories, cities, towns, and people, without exception of places or persons.

Art. II.—Immediately on the signature of this treaty, a convention shall be entered into between a commissioner or commissioners appointed by the general-in-chief of the forces of the United States, and such as may be appointed by the Mexican government, to the end that a provisional suspension of hostilities shall take place; and that in the places occupied by the said forces, constitutional order may be re-established, as regards the political, administrative, and judicial branches, so far as this shall be permitted by the circumstances of military occupation.

Art. III.—Immediately upon the ratification of the present treaty, by the government of the United States, orders shall be transmitted to the commanders of their land and naval forces, requiring the latter (provided this treaty shall then have been ratified by the government of the Mexican republic) immediately to desist from blockading any Mexican ports; and requiring the former (under the same condition) to commence, at the earliest moment practicable, withdrawing all troops of the United States then in the interior of the Mexican republic, to points that shall be selected by common agreement, at a distance from the sea-ports not exceeding thirty leagues; and such evacuation of the interior of the republic shall be completed with the least possible delay: the Mexican government hereby binding itself to afford every facility in its power for rendering the same convenient to the troops, on their march, and in their new positions, and for promoting a good understanding between them and the inhabitants. In like manner, orders shall be despatched to the persons in charge of the custom-houses at all ports occupied by the forces of the United States, requiring them (under the same condition) immediately to deliver possession of the same to the persons authorized by the Mexican government to receive it, together with all bonds and evidences of debt for duties on importations and on exportations, not yet fallen due. Moreover, a faithful and exact account shall be made out, showing the entire amount of all duties on imports and on exports, collected at such custom-houses, or elsewhere in Mexico, by authority of the United States, from and after the day of the ratification of this treaty by the government of the Mexican republic; and also an account of the cost of collection; and such entire amount, deducting only the cost of collection, shall be delivered to the Mexican government, at the city of Mexico, within three months after the exchange of ratifications.

The evacuation of the capital of the Mexican republic by the troops of the United States, in virtue of the above stipulation, shall be completed in one month after the orders there stipulated for shall have been received by the commander of said troops, or sooner if possible.

Art. IV.—Immediately after the exchange of ratifications of the present treaty, all castles, forts, territories, places and possessions, which have been taken and occupied by the forces of the United States during the present war, within the limits of the Mexican republic, as about to be established by the following article, shall be definitely restored to the said republic, together with all the artillery, arms, apparatus of war, munitions, and other public property, which were in the said castles and forts when captured, and which shall remain there at the time when this treaty shall be duly ratified by the government of the Mexican republic. To this end, immediately upon the signature of this treaty, orders shall be despatched to the American officers commanding such castles and ports, securing against the removal or destruction of any such artillery, arms, apparatus of war, munitions, or other public property. The city of Mexico, within the inner line of intrenchments, surrounding the said city, is comprehended in the above stipulations, as regards the restoration of artillery, apparatus of war, &c.

The final evacuation of the territory of the Mexican republic by the forces of the United States, shall be completed in three months from the said exchange of ratifications, or sooner if possible: the Mexican republic hereby engaging, as in the foregoing article, to use all means in its power for facilitating such evacuation, and rendering it convenient to the troops, and for promoting a good understanding between them and the inhabitants.

If, however, the ratification of this treaty by both parties should not take place in time to allow the embarkation of the troops of the United States to be completed before the commencement of the sickly season, at the Mexican ports on the Gulf of Mexico, in such case a friendly arrangement shall be entered into between the general-in-chief of the said troops and the Mexican government, whereby healthy and otherwise suitable places, at a distance from the ports not exceeding thirty leagues, shall be designated for the residence of such troops as may not yet have embarked, until the return of the healthy season. And the space of time here referred to as comprehending the sickly season, shall be understood to extend from the first day of May to the first day of November.

All prisoners of war taken on either side, on land or on sea, shall be restored as soon as practicable after the exchange of the ratifications of this treaty. It is also agreed that if any Mexicans should now be held as captives by any savage tribe within the limits of the United States, as about to be established by the following article, the government of the said United States will exact the release of such captives, and cause them to be restored to their country.

Art. V.—The boundary line between the two republics shall commence in the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, opposite the mouth of the Rio Grande, otherwise called Rio Bravo del Norte, or opposite the mouth of its deepest branch, if it should have more than one branch emptying directly into the sea; from thence up the middle of that river, following the deepest channel, where it has more than one, to the point where it strikes the southern boundary of New Mexico; thence, westwardly, along the whole southern boundary of New Mexico (which runs north of the town called *Paso*) to its western termination; thence northward along the western line of New Mexico, until it intersects the first branch of the river Gila; (or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, then to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same;) thence down the middle of the said branch and of the said river, until it empties into the Rio Colorado; thence across the Rio Colorado, following the division line between Upper and Lower California, to the Pacific ocean.

The southern and western limits of New Mexico, mentioned in this article, are those laid down in the map, entitled "*Map of the United Mexican States, as organized and defined by various acts of the Congress of said republic, and constructed according to* *the best authorities. Revised edition. Published at New York, in* 1847, *by J. Disturnell.*" Of which map a copy is added to this treaty, bearing the signatures and seals of the undersigned plenipotentiaries. And in order to preclude all difficulty in tracing upon the ground the limit separating Upper from Lower California, it is agreed that the said limit shall consist of a straight line, drawn from the middle of the Rio Gila, where it unites with the Colorado, to a point on the coast of the Pacific ocean—distant one marine league due south of the southernmost point of the port of San Diego, according to the plan of said port, made in the year 1782, by Don Juan Pantojer, second sailingmaster of the Spanish fleet, and published at Madrid in the year 1802, in the atlas to the voyage of the schooners *Sutil* and *Mexicana*, of which plan a copy is hereunto added, signed and sealed by the respective plenipotentiaries.

In order to designate the boundary line with due precision, upon authoritative maps, and to establish on the ground landmarks which shall show the limits of both republics, as described in the present article, the two governments shall each appoint a commissioner and a surveyor, who, before the expiration of one year from the date of the exchange of ratification of this treaty, shall meet at the port of San Diego, and proceed to run and mark the said boundary in its whole course to the mouth of the Rio Bravo del Norte. They shall keep journals and make out plans of their operations; and the result agreed upon by them, shall be deemed a part of this treaty, and shall have the same force as if it were inserted therein. The two governments will amicably agree regarding what may be necessary to these persons, and also as to their respective escorts, should such be necessary.

The boundary line established by this article shall be religiously respected by each of the two republics, and no change shall ever be made therein, except by the express and free consent of both nations, lawfully given by the general government of each, in conformity with its own constitution.

Art. VI.—The vessels and citizens of the United States shall, in all time, have a free and uninterrupted passage by the Gulf of California, and by the river Colorado, below its confluence with the Gila, to and from their possessions situated north of the boundary line defined in the preceding article; it being understood that this passage is to be by navigating the Gulf of California, and the river Colorado; and not by land, without the express consent of the Mexican government.

If, by the examinations that may be made, it should be ascertained to be practicable and advantageous to construct a road, canal, or railway, which should, in whole or in part, run upon the river Gila, or upon its right or its left bank, within the space of one marine league from either margin of the river, the governments of both republics will form an agreement regarding its construction, in order that it may serve equally for the use and advantage of both countries.

Art. VII.—The river Gila, and the part of the Del Norte lying below the southern boundary of New Mexico, being, agreeably to the fifth article, divided in the middle between the two republics, the navigation of the Gila and of the Bravo, below said boundary, shall be free and common to the vessels and citizens of both countries; and neither shall, without the consent of the other, construct any work that may impede or interrupt, in whole or in part, the exercise of this right—not even for the purpose of favouring new methods of navigation. Nor shall any tax or contribution, under any denomination or title, be levied upon vessels, or persons navigating the same, or upon merchandise, or effects, transported thereon, except in the case of landing upon one of their shores. If, for the purpose of making the said rivers navigable, or for maintaining them in such state, it should be necessary or advantageous to establish any tax or contribution, this shall not be done without the consent of both governments.

The stipulations contained in the present article shall not impair the territorial rights of either republic, within its established limits.

Art. VIII.—Mexicans now established in territories previously belonging to Mexico, and which remain, for the future, within the limits of the United States, as defined by the present treaty, shall be free to continue where they now reside, or to remove, at any time, to the Mexican republic, retaining the property which they possess in the said territories, or disposing thereof, and removing the proceeds wherever they please, without their being subjected, on this account, to any contribution, or tax, or charge, whatever.

Those who shall prefer to remain in said territories, may either retain the title and rights of Mexican citizens, or acquire those of citizens of the United States. But they shall be under the obligation to make their selection within one year from the date of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty; and those who shall remain in the said territories, after the expiration of that year, without having declared their intention to retain the character of Mexicans, shall be considered to have elected to become citizens of the United States.

In the said territories, property of every kind, now belonging to Mexicans not established there, shall be inviolably respected. The present owners, the heirs of these, and all Mexicans who may hereafter acquire said property by contract, shall enjoy with respect to it, guarantees equally ample as if the same belonged to citizens of the United States.

Art. IX.—[This article is expunged, and in its stead the Senate has adopted and inserted substantially the third article of the treaty with France, of 1803, for the cession of Louisiana, to the effect *that inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the Union of the United States, and admitted as soon as Congress shall determine, according to the principles of the federal constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States; and in the mean time, they shall be maintained and protected in the full enjoyment of their liberty, property, and the religion which they profess.*]

Art. X.—(EXPUNGED.)

Art. XI.—Considering that a great part of the territories which, by the present treaty, are to be comprehended for the future within the limits of the United States, is now occupied by savage tribes who will hereafter be under the control of the government of the United States, and whose incursions within the territory of Mexico would be prejudicial in the extreme, it is solemnly agreed that all such incursions shall be forcibly restrained by the government of the United States, whensoever this may be necessary; and that when they cannot be prevented, they shall be punished by the said government, and satisfaction for the same shall be exacted—all in the same way, and with equal diligence and energy, as if the same incursions were committed within its own territory, against its own citizens.

It shall not be lawful, under any pretext whatever, for any inhabitant of the United States to purchase or acquire any Mexican, or any foreigner residing in Mexico, who may have been captured by Indians inhabiting the territory of either of the two republics, nor to purchase or acquire horses, mules, cattle, or property of any kind, stolen within Mexican territory by such Indians: nor to provide such Indians with fire-arms or ammunition, by sale or otherwise.

And in the event of any person or persons captured within Mexican territory by Indians, being carried into the territory of the United States, the government of the latter engages and binds itself in the most solemn manner, so soon as it shall know of such captives being within its territory, and shall be able to do so, through the faithful exercise of its influence and power, to rescue them and return them to their country, or deliver them to the agent or representative of the Mexican government. The Mexican authorities will, as far as practicable, give to the government of the United States notice of such captures; and its agents shall pay the expenses incurred in the maintenance and transmission of the rescued captives; who, in the mean time, shall be treated with the utmost hospitality by the American authorities at the place where they may be. But if the government of the United States, before receiving such notice from Mexico, should obtain intelligence, through any other channel, of the existence of Mexican captives within its territory, it will proceed forthwith to effect their release and delivery to the Mexican agent, as above stipulated.

For the purpose of giving to these stipulations the fullest possible efficacy, thereby affording the security and redress demanded by their true spirit and intent, the government of the United States will now and hereafter pass, without unnecessary delay, and always vigilantly enforce, such laws as the nature of the subject may require. And finally, the sacredness of this obligation shall never be lost sight of by the said government when providing for the removal of Indians from any portion of said territories, or for its being settled by the citizens of the United States; but, on the contrary, special care then shall be taken not to place its Indian occupants under the necessity of seeking new homes, by committing those invasions which the United States have solemnly obliged themselves to restrain.

Art. XII.—In consideration of the extension acquired by the boundaries of the United States, as defined in the fifth article of the present treaty, the government of the United States engages to pay to that of the Mexican republic the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, in the one or the other of the two modes below specified.

[N. B. Two modes of payment are here set forth in the treaty. The latter being by annual instalments of three millions of dollars, was accepted by the Mexican government.]

Art. XIII.—The United States engage, moreover, to assume and pay to the claimants all the amounts now due them, and those hereafter to become due, by reason of the claims already liquidated and decided against the Mexican republic, under the conventions between the two republics severally concluded on the 11th day of April, eighteen hundred and thirty-nine, and on the 30th day of January, eighteen hundred and forty-three; so that the Mexican republic shall be absolutely exempt for the future, from all expense whatever on account of the said claims.

Art. XIV.—The United States do furthermore discharge the Mexican republic from all claims of citizens of the United States, not heretofore decided against the Mexican government, which may have arisen previously to the date of the signature of this treaty; which discharge shall be final and perpetual, whether the said claims be rejected or be allowed by the board of commissioners provided for in the following article, and whatever shall be the total amount of those allowed.

Art. XV.—The United States, exonerating Mexico from all demands on account of the claims of their citizens mentioned in the preceding article, and considering them entirely and for ever cancelled, whatever their amount may be, undertake to make satisfaction for the same, to an amount not exceeding three and one quarter millions of dollars. To ascertain the validity and amount of those claims, a board of commissioners shall be established by the government of the United States, whose awards shall be final and conclusive; provided, that in deciding upon the validity of each claim, the board shall be guided and governed by the principles and rules of decision prescribed by the first and fifth articles of the unratified convention, concluded at the city of Mexico on the twentieth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and forty-three; and in no case shall an award be made in favour of any claim not embraced by these principles and rules.

If, in the opinion of the said board of commissioners, or of the claimants, any books, records, or documents in the possession or power of the government of the Mexican republic, shall be deemed necessary to the just decision of any claim, the commissioners, or the claimants through them, shall within such period as Congress may designate, make an application in writing for the same, addressed to the Mexican minister for foreign affairs, to be transmitted by the secretary of state of the United States; and the Mexican government engages, at the earliest possible moment after the receipt of such demand, to cause any of the books, records, or documents, so specified, which shall be in their possession or power (or authenticated copies or extracts of the same) to be transmitted to the said secretary of state, who shall immediately deliver them over to the said board of commissioners; Provided, that no such application shall be made by, or at the instance of, any claimant, until the facts which it is expected to prove by such books, records, or documents, shall have been stated under oath or affirmation.

Art. XVI.—Each of the contracting parties reserves to itself the entire right to fortify whatever point within its territory it may judge proper so to fortify, for its security.

Art. XVII.—The treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, concluded at the city of Mexico on the 5th day of April, A. D. 1831, between the United States of America and the United Mexican States, except the additional article, and except so far as the stipulations of the said treaty may not be incompatible with any stipulation contained in the present treaty, is hereby revived for the period of eight years from the day of the exchange of ratifications of this treaty, with the same force and virtue as if incorporated therein; it being understood that each of the contracting parties reserves to itself the right, at any time after the said period of eight years shall have expired, to terminate the same by giving one year's notice of such intention to the other party.

Art. XVIII.—All supplies whatever for troops of the United States in Mexico, arriving at ports in the occupation of such troops previous to the final evacuation thereof, although subsequently to the restoration of the custom-houses at such ports, shall be entirely exempt from duties and charges of any kind; the government of the United States hereby engaging and pledging its faith to establish, and vigilantly to enforce, all possible guards for securing the revenue of Mexico, by preventing the importation, under cover of this stipulation, of any articles other than such, both in kind and in quality, as shall really be wanted for the use and consumption of the forces of the United States during the time they may remain in Mexico. To this end, it shall be the duty of all officers and agents of the United States to denounce to the Mexican authorities at the respective ports any attempts at a fraudulent abuse of this stipulation which they may know of or may have reason to suspect, and to give to such authorities all the aid in their power with regard thereto; and every such attempt, when duly proved and established by sentence of a competent tribunal, shall be punished by the confiscation of the property so attempted to be fraudulently introduced.

Art. XIX.—With respect to all merchandise, effects, and property whatsoever, imported into ports of Mexico whilst in the occupation of the forces of the United States, whether by citizens of either republic, or by citizens or subjects of any neutral nation, the following rules shall be observed:

1. All such merchandise, effects, and property, if imported previously to the restoration of the custom-houses to the Mexican authorities, as stipulated for in the third article of this treaty, shall be exempt from confiscation, although the importation of the same be prohibited by the Mexican tariff.

2. The same perfect exemption shall be enjoyed by all such merchandise, effects, and property, imported subsequently to the restoration of the custom-houses, and previously to

the sixty days fixed in the following article for the coming into force of the Mexican tariff, at such ports respectively; the said merchandise, effects, and property, being, however, at the time of their importation, subject to the payment of duties, as provided for in the said following article.

3. All merchandise, effects, and property described in the two rules foregoing shall, during their continuance at the place of importation. or upon their leaving such place for the interior, be exempt from all duty, tax, or impost of every kind, under whatsoever title or denomination. Nor shall they be there subjected to any charge whatsoever upon the sale thereof.

4. All merchandise, effects, and property, described in the first and second rules, which shall have been removed to any place in the interior whilst such place was in the occupation of the forces of the United States, shall, during their continuance therein, be exempt from all tax upon the sale or consumption thereof, and from every kind of impost or contribution, under whatsoever title or denomination.

5. But if any merchandise, effects, or property, described in the first and second rules, shall be removed to any place not occupied at the time by the forces of the United States, they shall, upon their introduction into such place, or upon their sale or consumption there, be subject to the same duties which, under the Mexican laws, they would be required to pay in such cases if they had been imported in time of peace, through the maritime custom-houses, and had there paid the duties conformably with the Mexican tariff.

6. The owners of all merchandise, effects, or property described in the first and second rules, and existing in any port of Mexico, shall have the right to reship the same, exempt from all tax, impost, or contribution whatever.

With respect to the metals, or other property, exported from any Mexican port whilst in the occupation of the forces of the United States, and previously to the restoration of the custom-house at such port, no person shall be required by the Mexican authorities, whether general or state, to pay any tax, duty, or contribution upon any such exportation, or in any manner to account for the same to the said authorities.

Art. XX.—Through consideration for the interests of commerce generally, it is agreed, that if less than sixty days should elapse between the date of the signature of this treaty and the restoration of the custom-houses, conformably with the stipulation in the third article, in such case, all merchandise, effects, and property whatsoever, arriving at the Mexican ports after the restoration of the said custom-houses, and previously to the expiration of sixty days after the day of the signature of this treaty, shall be admitted to entry; and no other duties shall be levied thereon than the duties established by the tariff found in force at such custom-houses at the time of the restoration of the same. And to all such merchandise, effects, and property, the rules established by the preceding article shall apply.

Art. XXI.—If, unhappily, any disagreement should hereafter arise between the governments of the two republics, whether with respect to the interpretation of any stipulation in this treaty, or with respect to any other particular concerning the political or commercial relations of the two nations, the said governments, in the name of those nations, do promise to each other that they will endeavour, in the most sincere and earnest manner, to settle the differences so arising, and to preserve the state of peace and friendship in which the two countries are now placing themselves; using, for this end, mutual representations and pacific negotiations. And if, by these means, they should not be enabled to come to an agreement, a resort shall not, on this account, be had to reprisals, aggression, or hostility of any kind, by the one republic against the other, until the government of that which deems itself aggrieved shall have maturely considered, in the spirit of peace and good neighbourship, whether it would not be better that such difference should be settled by the arbitration of commissioners appointed on each side, or by that of a friendly nation. And should such course be proposed by either party, it shall be acceded to by the other, unless deemed by it altogether incompatible with the nature of the difference, or the circumstances of the case.

Art. XXII.—If (which is not to be expected, and which God forbid!) war shall unhappily break out between the two republics, they do now, with a view to such calamity, solemnly pledge themselves to each other and to the world, to observe the following rules, absolutely, where the nature of the subject permits, and as closely as possible in all cases where such absolute observance shall be impossible.

1. The merchants of either republic then residing in the other shall be allowed to remain twelve months, (for those dwelling in the interior,) and six months (for those dwelling at the seaports,) to collect their debts and settle their affairs; during which periods, they shall enjoy the same protection, and be on the same footing, in all respects, as the citizens or subjects of the most friendly nations; and, at the expiration thereof, or at any time before,

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